

Scratches in the Scrovegni Chapel
and Inscriptions in Issogne Castle:
Conversations in Post-Medieval Graffiti
by
Stephanie Luksenburg

A Thesis Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

Approved March 2012 by the
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Corine Schleif, Co-chair
J. Gray Sweeney, Co-chair
Markus Cruse

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2012

ABSTRACT

Graffiti at the Arena Chapel and Issogne Castle engage in conversation with the frescoes and the functions of the spaces. These marks produce discussions of cultural issues. The graffiti found in the chapel and castle can be considered ritual and performative acts, visually documenting conversations among diverse audiences in the late medieval and early modern periods. Scholars of the Arena Chapel frescoes have studied the intricate painted iconography. Adding graffiti to the analysis of the chapel allows for a different interpretation of one of the most famous fresco programs. Abundant marks appear on figures in the scene of Hell in the Last Judgment, and are analyzed in terms of the medieval concepts of optics and sight, as well as in respect to class. At Issogne Castle, visitors inscribed graffiti on figures and scenes to represent their responses to key social issues. These included questions of class and occupation, along with political and religious concerns. Contextualizing graffiti in this way enables contemporary scholars to uncover a more complex and subtle understanding of the conversations on the wall in the late medieval and early modern periods through case studies of two monuments of art history.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my committee members, Dr. J. Gray Sweeney, Dr. Corine Schleif, and Dr. Markus Cruse, for their support and guidance. I would also like to thank the Herberger Institute School of Art staff for all of their help throughout my time as a graduate student at Arizona State University, particularly the director, Adriene Jenik. This thesis would not exist without Caitlin Deegan, my fellow graduate student. A final note of gratitude must go to my parents, for their undying support and encouragement throughout all of my education, as well as to my friends and family support system.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF FIGURES	iv
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 THE ARENA CHAPEL	16
3 ISSOGNE CASTLE	55
4 CONCLUSION.....	109
BIBLIOGRAPHY	116
FIGURES	130
APPENDIX	
A COPYRIGHT PERMISSION FOR FIG. 13-17.....	144

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. <i>Last Judgment</i> , Arena Chapel.....	130
2. Detail of Figure 1, Arena Chapel	131
3. Detail of Figure 1, Arena Chapel	131
4. <i>Personification of Despair</i> , Arena Chapel	132
5. Detail of Figure 4, Arena Chapel	132
6. <i>Personification of Envy</i> , Arena Chapel	133
7. Detail of Figure 6, Arena Chapel	133
8. <i>Personification of Idolatry</i> , Arena Chapel	134
9. Detail of Figure 8, Arena Chapel	134
10. <i>Personification of Charity and Hope</i> , Arena Chapel.....	135
11. <i>Circumspection</i> , Arena Chapel.....	136
12. <i>Circumspection, Documenta amoris</i>	137
13. <i>Guardhouse</i> , Issogne Castle	138
14. <i>Produce Stalls</i> , Issogne Castle.....	139
15. <i>Apothecary</i> , Issogne Castle.....	140
16. <i>Salami-cheese Shop</i> , Issogne Castle.....	141
17. Detail of Figure 16, Issogne Castle	141
18. “Gossip is Evil,” Issogne Castle	142
19. <i>Graffito I</i> , Issogne Castle	143
20. <i>Graffito II</i> , Issogne Castle.....	143

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Historically, graffiti have always been interwoven with the human experience. Graffiti may have first appeared in caves such as Lascaux. In Roman cities such as Pompeii and Herculaneum, ancient graffiti have been the subject of numerous scholarly studies. Medieval graffiti, however, have not received much attention by scholars, until recently. Increased interest in contemporary graffiti over the last two decades has led to a new willingness to study medieval graffiti. Two case studies from late medieval Italy, the Arena Chapel and Issogne Castle, that amassed large quantities of graffiti throughout the late medieval and early modern periods, will be studied because they represent social issues and class divisions of the period.

Graffiti produce a powerful form of communication that speaks to both current and future writers and readers. The “semi-public” settings of the frescoes and graffiti created opportunities for interaction with broad segments of society. Arguably, a significant part of the messages of graffiti is based on placement and location, as graffiti interact with the surfaces on which they are written. Graffiti also communicate with other graffiti as the presence encourages more graffiti to appear in the same location. Since graffiti appropriate surfaces, the surfaces on which they appear become part of the meaning. Given that graffiti encourage more graffiti, strata of graffiti accumulate, which frequently comment on earlier messages, either in the form of inscriptions or drawings, or they may simply

converse with each other due to their similar placement. Although scholars sometimes seem to ignore the graffiti (scratch-marks) on the *Last Judgment* in the Arena Chapel (chapter one) they have affected how the fresco is viewed. For example, if someone who is ignorant of the Christian concept of Hell viewed this scene – where Heaven has no scratch-marks upon the saved figures whereas Hell’s damned figures are repeatedly and deliberately attacked – they would presume less respect is bestowed upon Hell, or what it represents. At Issogne Castle (chapter two) graffiti appear over many of its frescoed walls; the graffiti placed on these frescoes affect the reading and meaning of the frescoes, and vice versa. Through the medium of graffiti, I will show how multiple levels of communication can occur. The location dictates who the intended audience will be and the placement indicates the message. Although today graffiti are often viewed in a negative light, this was not necessarily the case for medieval and early modern views on graffiti.¹

Since graffiti are social, communicative interactions by people with each other and their surroundings, graffiti can be defined as performance ritual. The Arena Chapel and Issogne Castle graffiti are discussed as performative, ritual acts in this thesis. The graffiti in the Arena Chapel are ritualized responses (scratch-marks) to the fresco program and a representation of a performative act in which late medieval and early modern views of Hell are implied. Issogne Castle is a more literal conversation between the viewer and fresco, and the viewer and other

¹ Juliet Fleming, *Graffiti and the Writing Arts of Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2001), 9, 38. Graffiti was “common” and did not receive negative attention.

viewers, since numerous graffiti are texts that respond to the frescoes and the other graffiti. The castle's graffiti clearly occurred repeatedly over time, as evidenced by the numerous dates found in the inscriptions, with a large concentration of dates in the sixteenth century, though the entire date range runs from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries.

Both the Arena Chapel and Issogne Castle graffiti can be defined as ritual, “performative” acts. The basic definition of ritual is, for scholars in the twenty-first century, any repeated, formalized human behavior. In the twentieth century, ritual was traditionally used in anthropology to describe the “Other” – other cultures and peoples and their ways of life, rites of passage, and ceremonies, which indicate transitions between stages of life, stages of the year, etc. as used by Victor Turner. However, during the second half of the twentieth century and in the beginning of the twenty-first century, the definition and concept of ritual broadened. Victor Turner is ubiquitously cited in the study of ritual. His text, *The Ritual Process*, has influenced generations of scholarly work on ritual.² A specific type of ritual used to contextualize graffiti is performance. The use of the term “performative” for the Arena Chapel and Issogne Castle graffiti, along with the term's usage in other recent scholarly discourse on medieval graffiti, hinges on an understanding of performance theory. Performance is examined through a theoretical lens by Richard Schechner in his text, *Performance Theory*, in which he defines performance as occurrences of everyday life, such as “greetings,

² Victor W. Turner, *The Ritual Process* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969).

displays of emotions, family scenes, professional roles, and so on – through to play, sports, theater, dance, ceremonies, rites and performances of great magnitude.”³ The Arena Chapel and Issogne Castle graffiti are key examples of graffiti as ritualized performance.

The ritualistic, performative acts of graffiti-making on the frescoes and walls of the chapel and castle echo the ritual functions of the spaces. The medieval Catholic Church dictated the liturgical function of the Arena Chapel through a number of rituals and ceremonies. The chapel’s graffiti (scratch marks), which mainly appear on the images of the figures in Hell and the Vices, reflect the location’s message of salvation. Issogne Castle’s courtyard, an entry both ritual and social, as well as a performative, contains large amounts of graffiti on the frescoes that parallel the space’s function as a ritualistic greeting area through the conversations in the graffiti. The floors and rooms of the castle have different functions, and the frescoes and graffiti help illuminate the functions of the spaces. The highly coded ecclesiastic and domestic spaces of the Arena Chapel and Issogne Castle are the settings for the ritualized behavior of graffiti-making.

State of Research

Although some early scholarly studies on medieval graffiti were produced, it was not until the last decade that the historic graffiti of medieval society garnered a comparable level of recognition as graffiti from antiquity. In the

³ Richard Schechner, *Performance Theory* (New York: Routledge, 2003), xviii.

eighteenth and nineteenth century, Pompeii was excavated and the graffiti of Pompeii and elsewhere in the ancient Western world were a frequent topic of early scholarship. George Gordon Coulton's books from 1915 and 1928 begin the discussion of medieval graffiti in the twentieth century, along with Reginald L. Hine's *Church Graffiti* (1920).⁴ Until the late 1980s there was little scholarly interest in medieval and early modern graffiti, but a few key works had been produced, particularly Violet Pritchard's *English Medieval Graffiti*.⁵ In this study Pritchard interprets figures, scenes, designs, and words from churches around Cambridge. The descriptions and interpretations presented in her text are of great value in understanding medieval graffiti. Robert Reisner's *Graffiti: Two Thousand Years of Wall Writing* offers a broad history of graffiti.⁶ Reisner's definition of graffiti focuses on the "folk humor," the lewd and bawdy written poems and thoughts written on walls and other surfaces throughout time, from antiquity to the twentieth century. He notes that the act of graffiti-making is "one human activity not given serious consideration or study."⁷ Although Reisner considers graffiti taboo, and limits his definition of graffiti, he makes a strong claim for the historical importance of graffiti. In all the early scholarly work on

⁴ Coulton, *Medieval Graffiti, especially in the eastern countries* (London: Simpkin & Co., 1915); Coulton, *Art and the Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1928); Hine, *Church Graffiti* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1921).

⁵ Pritchard, *English Medieval Graffiti* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1967).

⁶ Reisner, *Graffiti: Two Thousand Years of Wall Writing* (New York: Cowles Book, 1971).

⁷ Ibid, 1.

medieval graffiti, a defensive tone appears in which writers argue for the importance of graffiti and acknowledge a lack of scholarly interest in the topic.

Many of the contemporary studies on medieval graffiti, which appear in the second half of the century, are focused on the United Kingdom, including: Doris Jones-Baker, “The Graffiti of Folk Motifs in Cotswold Churches”; Juliet Fleming’s *Graffiti and the Writing Arts of Early Modern England*; Andrew Gordon, “The Act of Libel: Conscripting Civic Space in Early Modern England”; Mark Gardiner, “Graffiti and their Use in Late Medieval England”; and Jason Scott-Warren, “Reading Graffiti in the Early Modern Book.”⁸ These texts have been useful in my exploration of medieval graffiti. Fleming’s text analyzes early modern graffiti through a theoretical lens, and explains that society was “paper-short.”⁹ She notes critical differences in the early modern (English) perception of graffiti and perception of graffiti today. These sources are helpful in considering the social and cultural differences of graffiti from the medieval and early modern periods.

English medieval graffiti has also become a focus of scholarly conferences in recent years. The Norfolk Medieval Graffiti Survey is a group that surveys the

⁸ Jones-Baker, “English Mediaeval Graffiti and the Local Historian,” *The Local Historian* 92.2 (1992): 4-19; Gordon, “The Act of Libel: Conscripting Civic Space in Early Modern England,” *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 32:2 (2002): 375-97; Gardiner, “Graffiti and their Use in Late Medieval England,” in *Arts and Crafts in Medieval Rural Environment*, ed. J. Klápště and P. Sommer (Hungary: Brepols, 2005), 265-76; and Scott-Warren, “Reading Graffiti in the Early Modern Book,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 73:3 (2010): 363-81.

⁹ Fleming, *Graffiti*, 9, 38.

existing medieval churches of English counties. Each inscription is thoroughly recorded, and the Norfolk Survey maps out where every inscription is located to create a network.¹⁰ Surveys like this enable scholars to better locate and interpret graffiti, allow the graffiti to be recorded before they are lost, and demonstrate the abundance and the historical value of graffiti. Such surveys build the reputation of graffiti as viable sources, and not as just “visual noise.”¹¹ The July 2010 International Medieval Congress at the University of Leeds, included a paper by Rebecca Williams, from the University of Liverpool, on how “graffiti offers an invaluable and unique insight into the thoughts and popular culture of medieval society.”¹² Perhaps because of the large number of small, rural churches remaining from the medieval period in the British Isles, many studies have been produced about the United Kingdom over the past thirty years.

In addition to English surveys of medieval graffiti, the end of the last century and beginning of the twenty-first century have yielded a plethora of fruitful literature on medieval graffiti from outside of the United Kingdom. In “Graffiti as a Medium for Memoria in the Early and High Middle Ages,” Carola Jäggi discusses the occurrence of personal names scratched over saints’ frescoed

¹⁰ “Norfolk Medieval Graffiti Survey,” accessed January 31, 2011, <http://www.medieval-graffiti.co.uk>.

¹¹ Véronique Plesch, “Memory on the Wall: Graffiti on Religious Wall Paintings,” *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 32:1 (2002): 169.

¹² “Historical significance of graffiti,” University of Leeds, accessed July 11, 2011, http://www.leeds.ac.uk/news/article/854/historical_significance_of_graffiti.

effigies throughout the Middle Ages.¹³ Omar Borettaz has produced a key collection of graffiti from Issogne Castle, including analysis of each different graffito, particularly rich in its consideration of class and social contexts, in *I graffiti nel castello di Issogne in Valle d'Aosta*.¹⁴ I have translated and studied this text closely for chapter two. Borettaz also produced two articles that summarize his findings of the graffiti in a comprehensive study of Issogne Castle, edited by Sandra Barberi.¹⁵ Barberi's collection also includes texts by a number of other notable scholars such as, Anna La Ferla, Bruno Orlandoni, as well as a chapter by Barberi herself, all of which closely examine aspects of Issogne Castle and Giorgio di Challant, but Borettaz focuses on the graffiti.¹⁶ In "The cult of images in light of pictorial graffiti at Doué-la-Fontaine," Marcia Kupfer sheds light on how the graffiti she uses as her examples, found near Saumur, France, can be seen as a part of the historical phenomenon of cult images and increases our understanding of this phenomenon.¹⁷ Sidney H. Griffith publishes a text that

¹³ Jäggi, "Graffiti as a Medium for Memoria in the Early and High Middle Ages," in *Memory & Oblivion, Proceedings of the XXIXth International Congress of the History of Art*, ed. W. Reinink and J. Stumpel (Netherlands: Kluwer Academic, 1999), 745-51.

¹⁴ Borettaz, *I graffiti nel castello di Issogne in Valle d'Aosta* (Turin: Priuli & Verlucca, 1995).

¹⁵ Borettaz, "Anche i muri parlano. I graffiti del castello," in *Il Castello Di Issogne In Valle D'Aosta: diciotto secoli di storia e quarant'anni di storicismo*, ed. Sandra Barberi (Turin: Umberto Allemandi & C., 1999), 153-6.

¹⁶ Barberi, *Il Castello di Issogne in Valle D'Aosta: diciotto secoli di storia e quarant'anni di storicismo* (Turin: Umberto Allemandi & C., 1999).

¹⁷ Kupfer, "The cult of images in light of pictorial graffiti at Doué-la-Fontaine," *Early Medieval Europe* 19:2 (2011): 125-52.

examines graffiti from Syrah.¹⁸ A particularly important contribution to this thesis is by Véronique Plesch, “Memory on the Wall: Graffiti on Religious Wall Paintings,” which examines graffiti found in Arbino, Italy.¹⁹ To judge from these examples it appears that a trend is moving the discourse of graffiti from a concentration in England to a worldwide focus.

Both of the case studies that are discussed in this thesis are drawn from brief comments in Plesch’s text. In this crucial article, Plesch discusses the ritualistic aspects of graffiti by using the example of graffiti found on the Oratorio di San Sebastiano at Arborio (a small chapel). Her research and conclusions suggested many of the issues explored in this thesis. Plesch notes that “devils and other evil figures have been defaced” and in her footnote she gives Giotto’s Arena Chapel as her example.²⁰ She also mentions Issogne Castle as a “rich assemblage” of graffiti, in another footnote. Plesch’s innovative scholarship has ignited my research on the Arena Chapel and Issogne Castle.

Despite the enormous scholarly literature focused on Giotto’s Arena Chapel, it is surprising that no text discusses the graffiti that appear within the chapel. The graffiti are largely in Hell of the *Last Judgment* fresco and on the

¹⁸ Griffith, “The Handwriting on the Wall: Graffiti in the Church of St. Anthony,” in *Monastic Visions: Wall Paintings in the Monastery of St. Anthony at the Red Sea*, ed. Elizabeth S. Bolman (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2002), 185-93.

¹⁹ Plesch, “Memory on the Wall,” 167-97.

²⁰ Ibid, 169, 191-92.

lower registers of the chapel, on the *Virtues* and the *Vices*. The comprehensive survey of the chapel by Giuseppe Basile is particularly utilized in chapter one, and provides valuable discussion of the state of research on the Arena Chapel.²¹ An earlier study edited by James H. Stubblebine, which was compiled in 1969, is also a helpful source not only for its articles on the chapel, but also because it provides copies of documents that relate to the Arena Chapel (such as the Purchase of Land on February 6, 1300) and excerpts from contemporary sources that refer to Giotto's work (such as Dante and Francesco da Barberino).²² Articles from 1939-1962, which include critical essays by Dorothy C. Shorr and Ursula Schlegel, both of which are utilized in this paper, appear in Stubblebine's anthology.²³ A third comprehensive study, edited by Andrew Ladis, assembles critical scholarly texts on the Arena Chapel as well, compiling sources from the entire century.²⁴ Ladis' collection includes Anne Derbes and Mark Sandona's "Barren Metal and the Fruitful Womb: The Program of Giotto's Arena Chapel in Padua" (1998),

²¹ Basile, *Giotto: The Arena Chapel Frescoes* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1993).

²² Stubblebine, ed. *Giotto: the Arena Chapel Frescoes* (New York: Norton Press, 1969).

²³ Shorr, "The Role of the Virgin in Giotto's Last Judgment," in *Giotto: the Arena Chapel Frescoes*, ed. James H. Stubblebine (New York: Norton Press, 1969), 169-81; Schlegel, "On the Picture Program of the Arena Chapel," in *Giotto: the Arena Chapel Frescoes*, ed. James H. Stubblebine (New York: Norton Press, 1969), 182-202.

²⁴ Ladis, ed., *Giotto and the World of Early Italian Art: An Anthology of Literature* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998).

alongside the earlier, classic articles by Shorr and Schlegel.²⁵ Ladis himself appears in the collection as well.²⁶ Ladis' text deals with the "Circumspection figure," a lesser-known image from the north door, which once led to the donor's palace. This figure plays a key role in this paper's examination of the Arena Chapel. Eva Frojmovic's "Giotto's Circumspection" reworks Ladis' definition of this Circumspection figure into an metaphor for the "old" and "new" optical theories prevalent when Giotto produced the chapel's frescoes and provides a basis for my use of this lesser-known figure.²⁷ Lastly, Laura Jacobus examines the "privacy" or restricted nature of the north door in the Arena Chapel, and how there are different sections of the chapel designated by class, which I utilize greatly, to analyze the levels of meaning in the frescoes and to connect the chapel graffiti to the Issogne Castle graffiti.²⁸ This is in no way an exhaustive inventory of the array of scholarly studies of the Arena Chapel.

In contrast to the Arena Chapel, the graffiti of Issogne Castle have been a main focus of the scholarly studies of the site. Archeologists and archivists have documented and commented on hundreds of the inscriptions and drawings.

²⁵ Derbes and Sandona, "Barren Metal and the Fruitful Womb: The Program of Giotto's Arena Chapel in Padua," *The Art Bulletin* 80:2 (1998): 274-91.

²⁶ Ladis, "The Legend of Giotto's Wit," in *Giotto and the World of Early Italian Art*, ed. Andrew Ladis (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 245-60.

²⁷ Frojmovic, "Giotto's Circumspection," *The Art Bulletin* 89:2 (2007): 195-210.

²⁸ Jacobus, "Giotto's design of the Arena Chapel, Padua," in *Giotto and the World of Early Italian Art*, ed. Andrew Ladis (New York: Gardland, 1998), 349-68.

Giuseppe Giacosa was one of the first to record and decipher the inscriptions dividing them into categories.²⁹ Within a few years of Giacosa text, R. Forrer published *Spätgothische Wohnräume und Wandmalereien aus Schloss Issogne*, in 1896.³⁰ Both Giacosa and Forrer focused on the courtyard area. Felice Ferrero's *The Valley of Aosta* (1910) discusses the illicit love story of Filiberta, one of Renato di Challant's daughters, and how "written testimony" of her drama can be found on the walls of the castle, citing Giacosa as his source.³¹ However, the most comprehensive study of Issogne Castle graffiti appears a century later than Giacosa and Forrer, when Omar Borettaz's 1995 *I graffiti nel castello di Issogne in Valle d'Aosta*, records 541 entries with location, placement, size, and language of each inscription, in addition to a detailed historical look at the castle and the Challant family (who owned the castle from around 1300-1650).³² Andreina Griseri's *Affreschi nel Castello di Issogne* also mentions the graffiti found in Issogne Castle, and utilizes Giacosa's discussion of the inscriptions.³³ In Steffi

²⁹ Giacosa, *Novelle e paesi valdostani* (Turin: Roux & Frassati, 1886); Giacosa, *Castelli valdostani e canavesani* (Turin: Roux & Frassati, 1898); and Giacosa, *I castelli valdostani* (Turin: L.F. Cogliati, 1905).

³⁰ Forrer, *Spätgothische Wohnräume und Wandmalereien aus Schloss Issogne* (Strassburg: Verlag von Fritz Schlesier, 1896).

³¹ Ferrero, *The Valley of Aosta; a descriptive and historical sketch of an Alpine valley noteworthy in story and in monument* (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1910), 249.

³² Borettaz, *I graffiti*.

³³ Griseri, *Affreschi nel Castello di Issogne* (Milan: Cassa di Risparmio, 1972).

Roettgen's *Italian Frescoes: The Flowering of the Renaissance* a chapter is dedicated to Issogne Castle, in which she incorporates the courtyard fresco cycle graffiti into her analysis.³⁴ In 1999, Barberi published *Il Castello di Issogne in Valle D'Aosta*, which, as previously mentioned, includes an article and essay (focusing on graffiti) by Borettaz as well as contributions by other important Italian scholars discussing facets of Issogne Castle. Evelyn Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance: Consumer Cultures in Italy* utilizes Issogne Castle's courtyard fresco cycle and the graffiti on these frescoes in her discussion of "shopping and surveillance," in which she argues that the frescoes show order and chaos, and are meant to send a message of what is acceptable and unacceptable marketplace and general late medieval behavior.³⁵

Objectives

I wish to offer a discussion of the deliberateness of the act of graffiti-making and its social context that brings a new level of understanding to the Arena Chapel fresco program and to Issogne Castle. I shall suggest that the frescoes are enhanced through the conversations produced by the graffiti. The fresco cycle of the Arena Chapel, located in Padua Italy, contains a fresco program by Giotto di Bondone that includes a *Last Judgment* scene where graffiti appears on Hell. The fresco cycle, particularly the *Last Judgment*, and its graffiti,

³⁴ Roettgen, *Italian Frescoes: The Flowering of the Renaissance 1470-1510*, trans. by Russell Stockman (New York: Abbeville, vol. 2, 1996).

³⁵ Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 65-70.

indicate late medieval understanding and agreement of the chapel's liturgical meaning via such ritual acts. A discussion of medieval optical theories, including an examination of a lesser-known Circumspection figure, along with belief in the evil eye are important aspects in the construction of my argument.

Issogne Castle, or the Challant Castle, situated in the Aosta Valley, northern Italy, is filled with graffiti – inscriptions, designs, dates, mottos, phrases – in a variety of languages, which include French, Italian, German, Spanish, and Portuguese. Of interest for discussion of graffiti is a set of frescoes on the loggia walls of the courtyard that illustrate fifteenth-century marketplace scenes that are covered with graffiti, where a number of the graffiti directly relate with what is depicted in the fresco scenes. The courtyard served as a “representation” space: A place to receive guests and showcase the family's name and affluence, along with the castle's utilitarian function of food service and domestic work. Most late medieval Italian homes and palaces had a liminal space in the form of a courtyard.³⁶ Inscriptions and markings found on Issogne Castle allow for a better understanding of social concerns and responses to those concerns by the presumably upper-class guests of the castle.

Castles in the Middle Ages served various roles and indicated the power and influence of a family. The different areas within the castle are delineated by the graffiti. Issogne Castle hosted many prominent guests from all over Europe, including a great number from France. The names of members of the nobility and

³⁶ Elizabeth S. Cohen and Thomas V. Cohen, *Daily Life in Renaissance Italy* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2001), 159.

the use of Latin in numerous graffiti suggest the elite status of the guests. The castle walls, columns, and nearly all the surfaces, became a guest book for those who stayed at the castle. On the courtyard frescoes, discussion of class is evident in many examples – the role and status of marketplace workers, the chastisement of the destitute (seen through the *pestapepe* figure in the Apothecary scene) and “spinners” and prostitutes (shown in the Fruit and Vegetable Stalls scene and the Guardhouse scene). Appearing in the service staircase is a message likely directed at the lower classes, the domestic workers. On the top, most privileged floor of the castle, inscriptions appear which exemplify the debate over the Protestant Reformation, presumably inscribed by elite guests.

Chapter 2

THE ARENA CHAPEL

New ideas regarding medieval reception of the Scrovegni Chapel (Arena Chapel) in Padua Italy emerge through a synthesized analysis of the frescoes and graffiti.³⁷ Prominently placed in the chapel, Giotto di Bondone's *Last Judgment* features interaction with viewers through graffiti in response to the actions depicted in Hell. In another section of the chapel a female figure with protrusions from her eyes highlights an alternative reading of the Arena Chapel's fresco program based on class.³⁸ Both examples underscore medieval theories of sight through the concentration of graffiti on the eyes of the Devil and the club-like forms protruding from the eyes of the female figure. This chapter argues for a different interpretation of one of the most famous late-medieval fresco programs, through analysis of graffiti, medieval concepts of sight and optics, as well as class.

The Arena Chapel served multiple purposes and audiences. Enrico Scrovegni, the donor of the chapel, apparently aspired for his chapel to be a public place because as early as 1304 Pope Benedict XI authorized a papal bull that promised indulgences to those who came to the chapel.³⁹ The public was encouraged to come to the Arena Chapel, with access available several times a

³⁷ Commonly referred to as "Arena Chapel" because the site was originally a Roman arena.

³⁸ Eva Frojmovic, "Giotto's Circumspection," *The Art Bulletin* 89:2 (2007): 195-210.

³⁹ Stubblebine, *Giotto*, 101.

year. However, Enrico Scrovegni, his family, and his close associates were the primary users of the chapel.⁴⁰ Thus, Enrico Scrovegni envisioned the chapel for “more than one audience,” and Giotto’s program reflects the different audiences: the patron himself, with his desire for salvation from the usurer’s Hell, his close family and friends, the intellectual audience from the University of Padua, and finally, the general public. Enrico Scrovegni, like all donors, needed the public to feel moved and repent. He also wanted to help purify his family’s name on a grand scale. Depending on the viewer’s entrance point and final destination, the fresco cycle is read differently. The message conveyed by the chapel can be read from past to present to future, and ends with the *Last Judgment*. However, if a privileged guest of Scrovegni entered or left the chapel through the private door to the Scrovegni palace, a different reading of the cycle would appear. This reading would either begin or end with the Circumspection figure at the north, private door. This north door, in Enrico Scrovegni’s time, offered a chance for him to create a public spectacle as he came and went, “a performative and ritual nodal point in the chapel.”⁴¹ The door is now sealed, which is likely part of the reason for the lack of discussion on the Circumspection figure and her counterpart figure, who frame the north doorway. The different entrance and exit for the privileged guests of the chapel, versus the main door located underneath the *Last Judgment* scene on the west wall, produced different readings of the fresco program.

⁴⁰ Derbes and Sandona, *Barren Metal*, 286-87.

⁴¹ Frojmovic, “Giotto’s Circumspection,” 195.

Documentation of the Arena Chapel

Surprisingly little documentation on the Arena Chapel exists but indicates a date range for the chapel's production and attribution of the fresco cycle to Giotto. A deed documents Enrico Scrovegni's purchase of the land in 1300. Documents from 1303, 1304, and 1305 indicate that the structure was complete by 1303, and that the chapel was in use by 1304. Transcripts and English translations of the documents appear in James Stubblebine's comprehensive study of the Arena Chapel, and these documents allow for a date range of the chapel.⁴² Additionally, a few references credit Giotto as the artist responsible for the Arena Chapel frescoes. Riccobaldo da Ferrara and Francesco da Barberino are two sources that attribute the fresco program to Giotto, documents dated 1312-13, which also appear in Stubblebine's volume. Francesco da Barberino's record, *Documenta amoris*, names Giotto as the artist of the Arena Chapel frescoes and is also utilized in my analysis of the less familiar Virtue figure, Circumspection, which connects both Giotto and Francesco da Barberino to the study of optics and to the University of Padua.⁴³ The second case study, Issogne Castle, chapter two, encounters a similar issue with a scarcity of sources. Enough evidence exists to date the Arena Chapel to the first decade of the fourteenth century, however the

⁴² James H. Stubblebine, ed., *Giotto: The Arena Chapel Frescoes: Illustrations, Introduction Essay, Backgrounds and Sources, and Criticism* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1969), 103-11.

⁴³ Frojmovic, "Giotto's Circumspection," 195, 199, 202-04.

documents present discrepancy and a gap between the chapel dates and the dates of the attribution of the frescoes to Giotto.

Giotto di Bondone is regarded as one of the leading figures of the Proto-Renaissance period, and the Arena Chapel is an exceptional example of his work.⁴⁴ Leonardo di Vinci, who was rarely known to award compliments, asserted that Giotto surpassed all artists, from all times, in talent and innovation.⁴⁵ Giotto was an apprentice of Cimabue, who is regarded as one of the greatest artists from the generation before Giotto and credited as a forerunner of the Italian Renaissance.⁴⁶ An abundance of scholarly work focuses on Giotto and, specifically, on the Arena Chapel frescoes, dated generally to 1303-13.⁴⁷ An appreciation for the intricate multi-level iconography and cross-references to complex theology and science appear in the scholarly literature.⁴⁸ Scholars, over the years, have also proposed the idea that collaboration between Giotto and multiple scientists and intellectuals, from the University of Padua, produced the fresco program. Eva Frojmovic, in “Giotto’s Circumspection,” shares this view of the frescoes. Her argument is primarily used in this chapter, since it

⁴⁴ “Renaissance” is used to indicate a period of art history.

⁴⁵ Luther Link, *The Devil: A Mask Without a Face* (London: Reaktion, 1995), 145.

⁴⁶ Stubblebine, *Giotto*, 71.

⁴⁷ Giuseppe Basile, *Giotto: The Arena Chapel Frescoes* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1993), 9.

⁴⁸ For a description of the fresco cycle, see Ibid, 13-15. For an analysis, see S. G. Mieth, *Giotto: Das mnemotechnische Programm der Arenakapelle in Padua* (Tübingen: 1991).

incorporates Francesco da Barberino and the medieval optical theories into her analysis. The University of Padua was a place of prestige, a *studium*, which drew great minds from all over Europe, where the study of optics emerged between the late-thirteenth century and the early-fourteenth century.⁴⁹ In possible collaboration with great minds of the time, Giotto produced a complex, multi-leveled fresco program that has peaked the interest of scholars throughout the centuries.

Visual Chronology

Throughout the layers of meaning in the fresco program and the graffiti on the frescoes, a relationship between art and optics becomes evident, beginning with the visual chronology of the overall composition of the frescoes. The frescoes represent the past (the Life cycles), present (the Vices and the Virtues), and future (the *Last Judgment*).⁵⁰ Chronologically from the altar to the entrance door, the fresco cycle begins with the *Annunciation*. The sidewalls contain horizontal bands of scenes, which start with the Life of the Virgin cycle on top, a row that portrays the Life of Christ next, and a band that depicts the *Passion* and *Resurrection*, all of which represent the past. The bottom register, in grisaille, illustrates the Virtues and the Vices: The south wall features the Virtues, and the north wall features the Vices. The images of the Virtues lead to Heaven, and the

⁴⁹ Nancy G. Siraisi, *Arts and Sciences at Padua: The Studium of Padua Before 1350* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute, 1973), 16 (for the definition of *studium*), 118-19 (for emerging optics study).

⁵⁰ Basile, *Giotto*, 319.

images that depict the Vices lead to Hell. The *Last Judgment* is the culmination of the program on the west wall, which represents the future.⁵¹ A breakdown of the composition of the frescoes begins to explain the complex iconography of the Arena Chapel fresco program.

Scholars have carefully analyzed the program, including references to the medieval optical theories, but ignore the graffiti. The graffiti appear mainly in the fresco showing Hell in the *Last Judgment* and the images of the Vices. Through a comparison to a figure on a forgotten “restricted” door on the north wall (the wall which depicts the Vices and leads to Hell), the medieval optical theories can be utilized to interpret a different level of analysis. A deeper level of analysis shows that optics is a theme, particularly the inciting of emotional responses by the general public through the “old” theory of sight (extramission) in the *Last Judgment*, which is highlighted by the addition of graffiti. A complex intellectual communication of all-awareness can also be seen as a theme related to sight, through the lesser-known Circumspection figure, which represents the “new” optical theory: intromission. Literature on this “new” optical theory was translated to Latin from Arabic at the beginning of the thirteenth century, and was studied at the University of Padua during the time that Giotto produced the frescoes.⁵² Aristotle’s texts, specifically the *libri naturales*, were used in the

⁵¹ Douglas P. Lackey, “Giotto in Padua: A New Geography of the Human Soul,” *The Journal of Ethics* 9:3/4 (2005): 551-52.

⁵² Stephen G. Nichols, “The Pupil of Your Eye: Visions, Language, and Poetry in Thirteenth-Century Paris,” in *Rethinking the Medieval Senses*, ed. S. G. Nichols, et al (Baltimore: Johns

study of natural philosophy and *scientia naturalis* at Padua, especially by medieval scholars Erazm Ciolek Witelo and Pietro d'Abano (Peter of Abano), who focused on optics.⁵³ Scholars have generally overlooked the importance of the graffiti or “defacement” that have been inflicted on the Hell scene in the *Last Judgment*, which can suggest concepts of optics and sight as a theme in the chapel’s frescoes. Although no analysis includes the graffiti, modern-day scholars since the 1960s have analyzed references to medieval optical theories throughout Giotto’s fresco program.⁵⁴ Adding the Arena Chapel’s graffiti enhances the scholarly discourse, particularly that which investigates the optical theories.

The Arena Chapel’s Hell and Graffiti

The *Last Judgment* encompasses the entire west wall and features an abundance of marks on the figures of Hell (Fig. 1). Christ is seated in the center and calmly looks down and to his right at the saved who are neatly assembled in Heaven. Meanwhile, to Christ’s left, below the golden mandala that encircles him, a red river of fire cascades down and through Hell. In Hell, the Devil and demons torture the damned (Fig. 1-3). Toward the bottom of Hell, a large, monstrous, blue figure – the Devil – squats between two dragons and gorges on the damned. The Devil and his demons and devils have deep scratch marks

Hopkins University Press, 2008), 288; Derbes and Sandona, “Barren Metal and the Fruitful Womb: The Program of Giotto’s Arena Chapel in Padua,” *The Art Bulletin* 80:2 (1998): 278.

⁵³ Siraisi, *Arts and Science at Padua*, 109-36.

⁵⁴ Frojmovic, “Giotto’s Circumspection,” 200.

through their bodies that indicate the viewers' ritualized, visceral responses to the scene. Satan has been physically "assaulted" and intentionally altered. His eyes are "defaced" to such an extent that all the paint has been removed and he has been completely "blinded." The other smaller evil figures have marks over their bodies. These marks are repeated. I contend that the marks are intentional graffiti deliberately placed only on Hell in the *Last Judgment* as a physical, performative response to the tortures that occur in Hell. The acts of torture seen in Hell would cause strong emotional responses of terror and fear in fourteenth-century audiences, since many of the acts depicted were real-life punishments used for sinners and criminals of Padua during the period. The *Last Judgment*, as the culmination and representation of eternal damnation so integral to medieval life, becomes a place where viewers reflect and physically respond to the concept of salvation through graffiti.

Considerable evidence supports that Hell was specifically and intentionally targeted for graffiti.⁵⁵ No other fresco scene in the chapel exhibits marks like those found on Hell, except for the other "undesirable" figures, such as the Vices, which lead to the depiction of Hell (Fig. 4-9). No deliberate markings appear on the *Last Judgment* depiction of Heaven. Heaven is weathered and cracked, as are large amounts of the frescoes. These damages are unintentional, occurred by time and humidity, and are not considered graffiti. In figure 1, which shows the entirety of the *Last Judgment* scene, the figures in Heaven appear on

⁵⁵ There are many other examples of works of art that have been marked with graffiti in a similar manner. See Ambrogio Lorenzetti's *The Ill-Governed City*, in the Palazzo Pubblico, Siena.

the same level as the figures with graffiti, which are found in Hell. The figures in Heaven are not harder to reach. Furthermore, it is unlikely that restorations would have removed graffiti from Heaven and not from Hell.⁵⁶ In the detail of Satan's face, his left eye has a visible long, deep, vertical gash and at least three horizontal marks, which creates a pattern that indicates the deliberate placement of the markings on the eye (Fig. 2). On his right eye, horizontal lines can be seen on the damaged surface, which might be continuations of the graffiti found over the left eye. The other evil figures that torture damned souls in Hell have deliberate scratches on their bodies as well (Fig. 3). The damned souls that receive the tortures in Hell are defaced in a similar manner, which indicates that viewers did not consider these souls to be victims, but instead, worthy of their punishments, and so indicate themselves to be complicit, tacit participants in the violence and punishments. Overall, it seems that the graffiti found in Hell were intentional and directly related to the violence depicted in the scene, violence that was drawn from punishments of everyday life.

The scratch-mark graffiti on the *Last Judgment* Hell scene indicate a “conversation” with the evil and sinful behaviors, and so, the graffiti also appear on the personifications of the Vices. Graffiti have been incised around the images of personifications of the Virtues, but not upon the actual figures, which suggest a respect for the Virtues and disrespect towards the figures that represent evil, the

⁵⁶ For a discussion of the restorations and conservation efforts in English, see Basile, *Giotto*, 377-80. In Italian, see P. Selvatico, *Sulla Cappellina degli Scrovegni nell'Arena di Padova e sui freschi di Giotto* (Padua, 1836).

Vices (Fig. 10). The disrespectful, physical response of scratch marks directly on the faces and bodies of images again appears in chapter two, with the “prostitute” and gamblers in the Guardhouse fresco at Issogne Castle. The occurrences of the “defacing” scratch-mark graffiti on the Arena Chapel (and Issogne Castle) indicate this act to be ritual and performative, as the graffiti were repeatedly performed. Giotto purposefully placed the Vices in the composition to lead to Hell, to illustrate and instruct on how a life of vices will end with eternal damnation and this connects the graffiti found on the Vices to the marks found in Hell. The personification of the Vice Despair depicts a female figure hanged by a rope, with a tiny demon figure in the left corner (Fig. 4-5). Her face has been “defaced,” with special attention devoted to her left eye. The rope and the demon figure above her both receive similar scratch marks. The personification of Envy is depicted as a male figure with large ears and horns, and a snake slithers out of his mouth and stares directly into the figure’s eyes (Fig. 6-7). The figure only shows the left side of the body and grasps a moneybag while depicted as on fire, a blaze that is at his feet and moves upward. The ears, horns, moneybag, left position, and fire are all symbols that signify evil, and particularly, the sin of usury. As seen with Despair, Envy’s face and snake undergo the same “defacement.” Large letters, “EINA,” presumably the end of a word or name, appear across Envy’s body, over the moneybag. On the personification of the Vice Idolatry, a female figure looks out at the viewers, and her right hand holds out a small figurine – an idol (Fig. 8-9). The idol holds a thin rope that follows

back to Idolatry and wraps around her neck. The figure of Idolatry is one of the few Vices in which both eyes are visible. Even so, her left eye is the focus, with a graffito “x” mark. The word “*Pozzato*,” presumably a name, appears over her slightly bent knee. The Vices were deliberately mutilated by many hands and over time with emphasis on the faces and eyes.

In addition to the words inscribed on Envy and Idolatry, countless graffiti of drawings and inscriptions are incised on the lowest register, where the images of the Vices and the Virtues appear. Inscriptions on the Virtue figures, which include a large number of drawings on the personification of Hope, only occur around the figures, and do not appear directly on the figures (Fig. 10). A level of respect was given to the Virtues so as not to disturb their integrity, while the Vices have been “defaced” and their left eyes have been “blinded” on nearly every Vice figure. The defacing graffiti are focused on the bodies of evil and sinful figures, with emphasis on the eyes, particularly the left eye, repeatedly done by multiple hands that indicate these graffiti to be ritualized, performative acts.

Punishments from Medieval Life in the Arena Chapel’s Hell

In the Middle Ages, legal punishment occurred in the form of acts of torture and execution, and these acts are seen in the Arena Chapel *Last Judgment* and stimulate an emotional response to Hell, by a parallel between punishment in life and that of the afterlife. These violent punishments seen in both the chapel and in late-medieval life include the “water ordeal” and the “spine-roller,” as well as naked floggings. They were common practices in Padua, and elsewhere in the

fourteenth century, with which everyone would have been familiar.⁵⁷ Generally, modern-day penal institutions no longer enforce punishments in such a manner so the scene no longer has the same effect. Michael Foucault's principal argument in his seminal study, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, explains that a transformation of criminal punishment moved from a "public spectacle" to a closeted, inner torture of the criminal's mind.⁵⁸ This transformation of punishment occurred through the late medieval and early modern periods, and was completed in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Although the punishments and penal system have changed to "behind closed doors," especially when Foucault wrote on the subject, today court cases are publicized. They are covered by the news, and death penalty executions are even available to be viewed on the Internet. Tortures in Giotto's Hell reflected the punishments inflicted upon accused or convicted criminals during the medieval period and produced a terrifying Hell that reflected what was described as Hell in sermons and literature.

Medieval punishments were specific to the crimes and severity of the crimes and are particularly seen with the sin of usury in the chapel. Punishments and tortures of crimes by hanging, flogging, and sexual assault by demons, can be seen in the Hell scene. Ursula Schlegel, James E. Czarnecki, and co-authors

⁵⁷ Link, *The Devil*, 136.

⁵⁸ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1979), 23-25.

Anne Derbes and Mark Sandona, stress that the arch-criminal Judas is shown hanged in Giotto's Hell. Derbes and Sandona also specifically observe that other damned figures, hung by the strings of their moneybags, send a similar message that usurers have a special place in Hell, which is also described in Dante's *Inferno*.⁵⁹ Czarnecki identifies why Judas was connected with usury: Usury was a "manifestation of the sin of Judas," a betrayal of God for money.⁶⁰ Emphasis on usury in the Arena Chapel appears as a focus in a multitude of scholarly observations, as this sin personalizes the fresco cycle to Enrico Scrovegni, and his desire to atone for his sin of usury and that of his father. Schlegel's argument is that Judas is depicted as hanged in Giotto's Arena Chapel Hell, which as she claims (in note 14) only two other scholars had discussed when she wrote her work in 1957.⁶¹ Derbes and Sandona take Schlegel's argument further, with a connection of usury to perverse sexuality, such as sodomy and prostitution.⁶² These connections are evident in the tortures of Giotto's *Last Judgment* Hell.⁶³

⁵⁹ Derbes and Sandona, "Barren Metal," 274-75.

⁶⁰ Czarnecki, "The Significance of Judas in Giotto's Arena Chapel Frescoes," in *Giotto and the World of Early Italian Art: An Anthology of Literature*, ed. Andrew Ladis (New York: Garland, 1998), 215-16.

⁶¹ Schlegel, "On the Picture Program of the Arena Chapel," in *Giotto*, Stubblebine, 182-202, esp. 186.

⁶² Derbes and Sandona, "Barren Metal," 274, 288.

⁶³ Odd Langholm, *Economics in the Medieval Schools: Wealth, Exchange, Value, Money, and Usury according to the Paris Theological Tradition, 1200-1350* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 464.

To support Derbes and Sandona's argument, they utilize the studies of the University of Padua that included an in-depth study of the illegality and impurity of usury.⁶⁴ Beginning with Aristotle and early Christian writers through the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries at the University of Padua, the concept of usury's "impurity" derives from a long history. As seen with the hanged figures by moneybags, Giotto showcases specific eternal torments for specific acts, making Hell more realistic and fearsome, particularly for usurers.

To further associate the unfortunate souls with the publicly punished people of the Middle Ages, the damned souls in Giotto's Arena Chapel Hell are represented as naked, which creates a sense of vulnerability. Forms of public punishment occurred when the convicted was stripped naked and dragged through the streets as Trevor Dean explains, in *Crime in Medieval Europe*, where he also discusses other methods of punishment, which is briefly summarized here.⁶⁵ Punishments were based on the severity of the crime. Criminals were executed in public through hanging, burning, dismemberment, drowning, or the wheel, depending on the sinful act committed. Thus, if the officials of the towns and cities based punishments on the criminal acts, it would seem plausible that Hell would punish sinners in a similar manner. Foucault observed that the audiences of eighteenth-century public executions would side with the convicted, and valorize the criminal. However, Dean speculates that late-medieval audiences did

⁶⁴ Derbes and Sandona, "Barren Metal," 277-286.

⁶⁵ Dean, *Crime in Medieval Europe 1200-1550* (London: Pearson, 2011), 118, 124-27.

not act like Foucault's eighteenth-century audiences, but instead approved of the punishment. Although this approval varied based on the class of the condemned, this understanding helps to read the significance of the graffiti. The graffiti may represent a desire not to face these torments alongside the figures in Hell and avoid them, by atoning for their sins. So terrifying was Hell that fourteenth-century viewers, as a group, performed a ritualized act; they felt a need to physically interact with the frescoes through scratch-mark graffiti.

The *Last Judgment* and Enrico Scrovegni

In the Arena Chapel, salvation was particularly pertinent to the donor, Enrico Scrovegni. Scenes of the Last Judgment in medieval art reflected a popular preoccupation with damnation and for the chapel's donor it was particularly personal. Enrico Scrovegni was the son of Reginaldo degli Scrovegni, a wealthy Paduan usurer, who appears in Dante's *Inferno*, in the seventh circle of Hell.⁶⁶ Dante's *Inferno* appears in his *Divine Comedy*, written between 1307 and 1319. He produced this text around the same time as Giotto's Arena Chapel frescoes, but Giotto's Hell was conceived before Dante's.⁶⁷ Although Giotto's *Last Judgment* was produced first, Reginaldo degli Scrovegni died prior to the construction of the chapel and was well known throughout Padua in his lifetime and certainly by the time of Giotto's fresco program. Dante's

⁶⁶ Stubblebine, *Giotto*, 108-09. The passage that specifically describes R. Scrovegni, in English.

⁶⁷ Basile, *Giotto*, 13. Also see Stubblebine, *Giotto*, 71, for a passage from Dante's *Purgatorio*, in English, which explains how Dante felt about Giotto.

inclusion of Enrico Scrovegni's father exemplifies his father's notoriety and disrepute. In reaction to generally negative public sentiment toward his father, Enrico Scrovegni may have commissioned the chapel in the hopes of redeeming his family's name. Dorothy C. Shorr and Schlegel analyze this argument.⁶⁸ The *Last Judgment* scene in the Arena Chapel includes an alleged portrait of the patron presenting a model of the chapel to the Virgin Mary and two other female figures with haloes (Fig. 1). Debate exists over the identification of the five figures involved in this presentation of the chapel, which includes suggestions of the male figure alongside Enrico Scrovegni as possibly Giotto's advisor for the fresco program, who could be a member of a confraternity.⁶⁹ If Enrico Scrovegni is the figure that presents the chapel then this implies that he belongs in Heaven even though he was still alive when Giotto painted the fresco. Enrico Scrovegni's presence would reinforce the theory that this chapel was erected for redemption and a safeguard to prevent the patron's damnation to Hell.

Hell in the Bible

The scratch-mark graffiti occur on the bodies of evil figures and are focused on a visual representation of Hell, which was a concept that was conceived and evolved throughout the medieval period. The Bible lacks any specific descriptions of Hell. This necessitated an imaginative visualization and

⁶⁸ Schlegel, "On the Picture Program," 182-202; Shorr, "The Role of the Virgin in Giotto's Last Judgment," in *Giotto*, Stubblebine, 171-76.

⁶⁹ Shorr, "The Role of the Virgin," 169-181.

complex iconography of Hell to be developed in sermons and artworks.⁷⁰ The resulting medieval depictions transformed Hell into a tangible place, which endowed its punishments with increasing power and influence throughout the period. Giotto's visual conception of the Devil was a part of a larger elaboration of the Devil in the period. Many images of the Devil gorging on the damned appear before and after Giotto's representation at the Arena Chapel. Scholars, such as Basile, Link, and Shorr agree that the *Last Judgment* mosaic in the Baptistery in Florence most likely influenced the Arena Chapel Devil. Basile discusses other artworks that possibly influenced Giotto, such as Pietro Cavallini's fresco in Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, Rome and the mosaic in the cathedral of Torcello.⁷¹ Shorr explains that Giotto's *Last Judgment* scene is based on the "conventional Byzantine formula," but is unique.⁷² In the Middle Ages, an evolution developed a visual representation of Hell.

In addition to the visual evolution of Hell presented by medieval artists, literary sources also advanced the materialization of Hell, with special emphasis on usurers, as seen in Giotto's depiction of Hell in the Arena Chapel. Through sermons read aloud by the clergy, people heard about the tortures one would face in Hell. In *Your Money or Your Life: Economy and Religion in the Middle Ages*,

⁷⁰ Basile, *Giotto*, 275.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Shorr, "The Role of the Virgin," 169.

Jacques Le Goff outlines the medieval view on usury through detailed examples of sermons, which describe the death and tortures that awaited usurers.⁷³ Sermons often utilized the Seven Deadly Sins (or the Vices) to express the immoral nature of different professions, and more than one sin was allocated to the usurer: avarice and sloth. Direct connection of the Vices and Hell were commonly used in sermons. Thus, late-medieval viewers would understand this visual connection of the Vices to Hell in the Arena Chapel, which is highlighted by the graffiti placement on the Vices in addition to the graffiti on Hell. Also commonly mentioned in sermons, as explained by Le Goff, was the fact that usurers were refused Christian burial, as were thieves and prostitutes. Jacques de Vitry (ca. 1170-1240), a noted French theologian, in a sermon states that God created three types of man – peasants, knights, clerics – and the Devil created a fourth, the usurer; usurers were said to return to their creator in Hell: “For the amount of money they receive from usury corresponds to the amount of wood sent to Hell to burn them.”⁷⁴ Additionally, the usurer’s death as explained by sermons was often indicated to be a sudden death, which was particularly worrisome for a medieval Christian, for they feared they might in a state of sin at the time of death. In another sermon examined by Le Goff, by Stephen of Bourbon (ca. late 1100-1261), an active French preacher and writer, describes the Usurer of Dijon, who,

⁷³ Le Goff, *Your Money or Your Life: Economy and Religion in the Middle Ages* (New York: Zone, 1988), 48-63.

⁷⁴ Jacques de Vitry, *The “Exempla” or Illustrative Stories from the “Sermones vulgares” of Jacques de Vitry*, ed. T.F. Crane (Nendeln: Kraus Reprint, 1967), sermon “*Ad status*,” n. 59, 14.

during the procession to his wedding, was knocked down and killed by the falling statue that depicted a usurer being carried off to Hell by the Devil.⁷⁵ Sermons made it clear to the medieval Christians that usurers would spend eternity in particularly gruesome pain in Hell.

Outside of the visual evolution of iconography of images, in which Giotto's *Last Judgment* was included, and verbal descriptions in sermons, the clergy had infrequent references in the Bible to rely on for descriptions of Hell. The Hebrew Bible contains only vague descriptions of a place which was interpreted as Hell but never differentiate Hell as its own entity: Jeremiah 7:31 and 19:2-6, and in 2 Chronicles 28:3 and 33:6.⁷⁶ In the two passages from Jeremiah, Hell is described as a place of fire; a place where people who have not repented for their sins go and that it is a place on earth. 2 Chron. 33:6 states, "And he made his sons to pass through the fire in the valley of Benennom: he observed dreams, followed divinations, gave himself up to magic arts, had with him magicians, and enchanters: and he wrought many evils before the Lord, to provoke him to anger." This passage suggests, with the "fire in the valley of Benennom" and "many evils," a reference to a place like Hell, but does not

⁷⁵ Stephen of Bourbon, *Anecdotes historiques, légendes et apologues, tirés du recueil inédit d'Etienne de Bourbon dominicain du 13e siècle*, ed. A. Lecoy de la Marche (Paris: Renouard, 1877), 365-66.

⁷⁶ All biblical quotes are taken from the *Douay-Rheims Catholic Bible*.

explicitly describe it. Hell is only briefly described in the Hebrew Bible, and is a place of fire, but not its own entity.

The Hebrew Bible directly refers to the names “Lucifer” and “Satan,” but the first name only refers to the angel before his fall, and not where he resides or his connection with Hell. The Devil and Satan become interchangeable terms as used in this chapter. Lucifer is frequently used to mean the Devil or Satan however, the name “Lucifer” is problematic, for Lucifer comes from Isaiah 14:12, and only is used in the Bible to refer to the angel before his fall.⁷⁷ Although the name Lucifer is not utilized after the angel’s decent into his new role, the Old Testament does describe Satan’s role as punisher in Job 1-2, when God directs Satan to strike Job with ulcers. “Hell,” as a place, is only apparent in one brief mention of fire, which is found in Zachariah 3:2: “And the Lord said to Satan: The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan: and the Lord that chose Jerusalem rebuke thee: Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?” Thus, another reference to a place of fire is mentioned, with the name “Satan” used, but no concrete location is discussed or described, besides a “place of fire.” The foundations for the Biblical conception of Hell and the Devil exist within the Old Testament and are further developed in the New Testament.

Only the New Testament distinguishes a separate place of “Hell.” For example, Matthew 5:22-30 especially verse 29, exhorts: “And if thy right eye scandalize thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee. For it is expedient for thee that

⁷⁷ Link, *The Devil*, 10-11, 23.

one of thy members should perish, rather than that thy whole body be cast into hell.” The “whole body” is “cast *into* hell,” which materializes Hell into a separate place. A connection of the idea of Hell with the eye, and the following line, “And if thy right hand scandalize thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee,” connects Hell to the hand, which allegorizes the senses sight and touch. The materialization of Hell as an extremely negative place begins to create an emotional connection with Hell.

The New Testament discusses Hell in several passages and designates it as its own entity, however no visual description appears. Matt. 25 describes the Last Judgment, which will occur at the end time: “Then he shall say to them also that shall be on his left hand: Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matt. 25:41). Thus, Hell is described in the Bible in terms of fire and as a place into which one can be cast – the beginning of a tangible realm that would be invented in the Middle Ages. The verses from Matt. 5 and 25 also indicate an association of Hell with the left, particularly with Christ’s “left hand,” as indication of those to his left going to Hell. Giotto places Hell to Christ’s left. This left placement is used through the medieval period. No early Christian images of Hell exist. Medieval artists and writers created an image of Hell based on an evolving conception. This conception was founded on biblical traditions, including exegetical texts and commentary. Romanesque artists invented the mouth of Hell and by the time

Giotto painted the Arena Chapel in the early fourteenth century, Hell had evolved from an entrance to an entire materialized realm.

Medieval Sight

Two optical theories were prevalent during the Middle Ages and they demonstrate the different readings that are discussed in this chapter, which are based on entrance and exit points determined by education and class. The extramission theory of vision is the ancient, classical view that prevailed through the medieval period and into the early modern period. According to the extramission theory, rays form in the eye and radiate outward to “touch” what is seen. The second notion, the intromission theory, is the modern concept of optics, and is based on the punctiform (point) description of light. The intromission theory emerged in Europe toward the end of the medieval period but was only known by a few scholars at the beginning of the fourteenth century, when Giotto designed the fresco program. Thus, an illustration that alludes to this “new” theory was an elite, “semi-private” message within the chapel.⁷⁸ In the extramission theory, light radiates outward to “touch” what is seen, while in the intromission theory light comes into the eyes. Different readings in the fresco cycle, based on the theories of sight and optics, are distinguishable with an analysis of the two theories of vision available in the period that Giotto produced his frescoes.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

The optical theory of extramission played a key role in medieval thought on sight and vision. Along with ancient philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle, medieval thought on vision was also highly influenced by the Early Christian writers. Vance discusses these Early Christian writers, and focuses on Augustine.⁷⁹ Augustine, a church father, explained how the five senses had a hierarchy founded on how they engaged with the human soul. Augustine believed sight was the most sacred sense. Augustine's text on vision include his definition of extramission theory: "We see bodies through our bodily eyes because the rays of our mind which shoot out of them touch whatever they observe; but we cannot snap off these rays and bend them back into our own [seeing] eyes except when we look in a mirror." Augustine made a distinction between sight and the "act of seeing," he explained that the eye makes it possible to see, but the soul does the seeing: "Thus, the faculty of sight, the phenomenon of seeing and the object seen are three separate and ontologically distinct components of a triad constituted by visual perception as a process." Sight was the "highest sense" and corporeal vision led to spiritual and intellectual visions, the "mind's eye."

Sight was an intimate sense in medieval society. The sense of sight was somatic to medieval people – face-to-face conversation involved "touching" through the eye's rays. It was not simply a passive act of looking, thus, eye contact and conversation had an added level of intimacy. So strong was the belief in the intimacy of sight that in the monastic world, nuns were instructed "to be

⁷⁹ Vance, "Seeing God," 16-17.

heard but not seen.”⁸⁰ This prohibition on women was not only found in the cloisters, but in the home as well, with wives. Bernardino of Siena (b. 1380- d. 1440), an Italian Franciscan priest and saint, in Sermon 21 of his Siena 1427 cycle, advises wives: “What you are permitted to touch, you are not permitted to see...O woman, never consent [to your husband’s request to see you naked]: it is better to die than to let yourself be seen [naked].”⁸¹ Through the eyes, one could “touch” and see deeply into a person – into the soul, the “mind’s eye.”

Bernardino of Siena preached in the fifteenth century, thus the extramission concept of vision was still relevant well after the introduction of the intromission theory.

Thus, when considering the motivation behind the idea of “defacing” or scratching out the eyes of Giotto’s Devil, the extramission concept so prevalent in medieval thought can be applied. Satan, or any personification of evil, being able to see someone, and therefore “touch” him or her, would have been a frightening notion. This is not to imply that medieval people thought that images of Satan, or any images at all, possessed the agency to actually see them. Nonetheless, the scratch-mark graffiti on Hell and the Vices suggest a medieval concept that the spiritual embodiment, or manifestation, of the Devil or evil in an image, could

⁸⁰ Corine Schleif and Volker Schier, *Katerina’s Window: Donation and Devotion, Art and Music, as Heard and Seen Through the Writings of a Birgittine Nun*, (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009), 482.

⁸¹ Franco Mormando, “*Nudus nudum Christum sequi*: The Franciscans and Differing Interpretations of Male Nakedness in Fifteenth-Century Italy,” *Fifteenth Century Studies* 33 (2008): 187.

bring harm or represent harm. Defacing the evil images could drive out the harm. Thus, a “ritual process” of scratching out the eyes occurred to protect oneself from evil, and, literally blind the image of the Devil, so evil could not see them.⁸²

The Evil Eye

The focus of graffiti on the eyes, specifically the left eyes of the evil figures in Hell and the Vices, suggest not only belief in the extramission theory, but also of the belief and traditions of the Evil Eye. Although Satan’s eyes serve as the focus for the majority of the markings, graffiti are found on both the demons and the damned souls’ bodies in the scene as well. The scratches that appear on the other parts of the bodies can still be read as a ritual act against the Evil Eye. Many of the Evil Eye practices do not specifically focus on the eye, such as the Italian horn symbols and gestures that emphasize the act as a protection against evil. The eye is one representation of evil. The focus of the repeated scratches on the Devil and the Vice figures’ eyes, however, connect the performative ritual act to this belief system. The Latin word, “*sinistra*” means “left” and “evil” or “unlucky.” The Italian word for left, “*sinistro*,” also has a double meaning of left and evil.⁸³ An association of left and evil is seen through Giotto’s placement of Hell on the left of Christ (as denoted in the Bible, Matt. 25:41). The left positions of the Vices, such as Envy, also highlight the

⁸² The term “ritual process,” Victor W. Turner, *The Ritual Process*, (Chicago: Aldine, 1969).

⁸³ *Cassell’s Italian Dictionary* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1967), 479.

connection between left and evil in the Arena Chapel. The graffiti portray that the medieval audiences also made this association, through the focus of marks on the left eyes of the evil figures, such as the Devil. Given that sight had a special intimacy in the period when Giotto produced the Arena Chapel fresco program, and the fact that the Devil's eyes received specific attention by graffitists, it seems likely that the process of graffiti-marking the evil figures in Hell relates to the Italian aversion to *malocchio* or the "bad eye."

The Evil Eye is a widely shared religious belief and cultural practice. Belief in the Evil Eye is "primarily the belief that someone can project harm by looking at another's property or person."⁸⁴ The concept can be traced back to early history, though dates vary by culture. The earliest concept of the Evil Eye developed during or soon after the Neolithic period.⁸⁵ The long history and wide-reaching, universal appeal of the Evil Eye highlights the fact that sight is considered a powerful sense in a number of cultures. The modern secular world has often labeled belief in the Evil Eye as "backward," or as an out-of-date superstition, even though many cultures still believe in some form of the Evil Eye. This bias has limited scholarly discussion on such belief systems. However, in the 1970s and 1980s, research was published that discusses the Evil Eye in modern cultures: a theorized volume of case studies, edited by Clarence Maloney;

⁸⁴ Ibid, v.

⁸⁵ Vivian Garrison and Conrad M. Arensberg, "The Evil Eye: Envy or Risk of Seizure? Paranoia or Patronal Dependency?" in *The Evil Eye*, ed. Clarence Maloney (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 287.

Rodney Needham's *Primordial Characters*; Michael Herzfeld's semiotic approach; and Anthony H. Galt's observations on an Italian belief system, among others.⁸⁶ These scholars have produced discourse integral to the development of a theoretical understanding of the belief system of the Evil Eye.

Beliefs and traditions surrounding the Evil Eye frequently utilize color. Color is a key element in Aristotle's texts on light and optical theories, and in turn, Aristotle's texts influenced the discussions of light and color by Witelo and Pietro d'Abano. Needham, in *Primordial Characters*, observes how colors are used to distinguish and characterize ritualistic behaviors, such as those found in the Evil Eye belief system. Use of the same color repeatedly gives colors meaning.⁸⁷ He characterizes this as a "sensory factor" wherein color pertains to vision. Thus, "sensory factors," such as color, create mediums of significance for social and cultural behaviors to form and be recognizable. This is seen in the protection and deflection against the Evil Eye. Italy has a long history of belief in the Evil Eye dating back to the Roman period, where Italians believe that evils are reflected in the eyes. This belief can be seen in the Tuscan ritual of putting a red

⁸⁶ Maloney, *The Evil Eye*; Needham, *Primordial Characters* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1978); Herzfeld, "Meaning and Morality: A Semiotic Approach to Evil Eye Accusations in a Greek Village," *American Ethnologist* 8:3 (1981): 560-74; Galt, "The Evil Eye as Synthetic Image and Its Meanings on the Island of Pantelleria, Italy," *American Ethnologist* 9:4 (1982): 664-81.

⁸⁷ Needham, *Primordial Characters*, 11.

ribbon between the eyes of oxen, wearing of red horns as amulets or charms against evil, and Southern Italy's suspicion of people with bloodshot eyes.⁸⁸

The basis of belief in the Evil Eye is found in the act of gazing. Eye contact and eye images play a role in the worldwide systems of belief regarding the Evil Eye, and most likely are deeply rooted in human behaviors, as well as throughout the animal kingdom.⁸⁹ The superstitions that involve belief in the Evil Eye connect with gazing, sight, and the eye. Thus, a connection to the graffiti found on Giotto's *Last Judgment* and the Vices, to the Circumspection figure, produce an overall theme of sight and optics found in the Arena Chapel.

The graffiti in the Arena Chapel illustrate belief in the Evil Eye and its possession of a social aspect that allow it to be seen as part of a conversation among members of a community. Enrico Scrovegni's decision to make the Arena Chapel public transformed the chapel into a place for performative, ritual acts of belief in the Evil Eye. The public can defend against the perceived evil as a group, by communication through publicly observable activities connected with the belief system. This defense is evident in Giotto's *Last Judgment*, since it is a religious scene that presents the Christian concept of what will occur at the end of time. Viewers become participants and publicly communicate and demonstrate their beliefs through the repeated, performative act of graffiti.

⁸⁸ Clarence Maloney ed., *The Evil Eye* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 8-9.

⁸⁹ Galt, "The Evil Eye," 669.

Intromission

Greatly influenced by Alhazen and Aristotle, western scholars around the time of Giotto's Arena Chapel fresco program began to understand light and optics in a different way. Although the medieval concept of optics, the theory of extramission, lived on in the views on sight and optics even after the medieval period, around the time that Giotto produced the Arena Chapel frescoes a "new" optical theory emerged. Intromission gained recognition due to the growing popularity of "modern science" or *scientia naturalis*. *Scientia naturalis* translates to "natural science" in English, but in relation to thirteenth and early-fourteenth centuries at University of Padua, it refers to more complexity, and is closely connected to medicine. At the time, at the University of Padua, the arts and sciences were combined in one school.⁹⁰ Arabic writer Ibn al-Haytham (Alhazen, in Latin translations) influenced western scholars interested in optical studies in the late-thirteenth and early-fourteenth centuries.⁹¹ Alhazen wrote in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and his writings were translated into Latin at the beginning of the thirteenth century.⁹² Alhazen is not the only early medieval Arabic writer translated from Arabic to Latin during the Middle Ages, however

⁹⁰ Siraisi, *Arts and Sciences at Padua*, 110-11.

⁹¹ Simon A. Gilson, *Medieval Optics and Theories of Light in the Works of Dante* (New York: Edwin Mellen: 2000), 26-29.

⁹² Nichols, "The Pupil of Your Eye," 288.

his influence was perhaps the greatest.⁹³ Alhazen, among the majority of medieval scholars of optics and theories of light, considered Aristotle an authority on these matters. Aristotle had a profound influence on general medieval scholarship and thought, distinctly noticeable at the University of Padua in relation to the natural and physical sciences. He discusses both optical theories through his analyses of light. Eugene Vance, in “Seeing God: Augustine, Sensation, and the Mind’s Eye,” explains how Aristotle accepts extramission in earlier works and then rejects it in later works.⁹⁴ Although Aristotle discusses extramission, he is most closely associated with the beginnings of intromission. The University of Padua was a leading center for Aristotelianism by the end of the fourteenth century, when the Arena Chapel fresco program was conceived.⁹⁵

Erazm Ciolek Witelo and Pietro d’Abano, two notable scholars who worked at the University of Padua in this period, produced the most pertinent studies on optics.⁹⁶ Nancy G. Siraisi, in *Arts and Sciences at Padua: The Studium of Padua Before 1350*, examines Witelo and Abano’s studies and texts.⁹⁷ Witelo

⁹³ Gilson, *Medieval Optics*, 26.

⁹⁴ Eugene Vance, “Seeing God: Augustine, Sensation, and the Mind’s Eye,” in *Rethinking the Medieval Senses*, ed. Stephen G. Nichols, et. al. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 24.

⁹⁵ Siraisi, *Arts and Sciences at Padua*, 135-36.

⁹⁶ Frojmovic, “Giotto’s Circumspection,” 202.

⁹⁷ Siraisi, *Arts and Sciences at Padua*, 130-32.

developed an optical theory, which he discussed in greatest detail in his *Perspectiva* (1268), without utilizing Alhazen, through a study of refraction of light in rainbows. His work on refraction of light was produced while he pursued optical studies at the University of Padua. Pietro d'Abano (Peter of Abano) initially refused to use Alhazen in his 1303 *Conciliator*, because he felt that his readers would be unfamiliar with this work; however, his slightly later work, *Expositio Problematum Aristotelis*, which he wrote for “more advanced readers,” alludes to Alhazen. This initial refusal to discuss Alhazen indicates that the intromission theory was still quite new and only a few scholars had begun to thoroughly study optics.

The Circumspection Figure

The personification of Circumspection is part of a pair of circularly framed allegorical figures on the forgotten north doorway that highlights both the “old” and “new” medieval optical theories. The medieval optical theory extramission is visually depicted by the forgotten image of the personification of Circumspection. The figure depicts the extramission optical theory, but in doing so, also indicates a “semi-private” conversation on intromission. Only the elite, educated residents of Padua knew of the optical theory of intromission and could read the complex message on the liminal space between the chapel and palace. The north door in the Arena Chapel served as a private door to the Palazzo Scrovegni, a special entrance for Enrico Scrovegni and his guests. Eva Frojmovic, in “Giotto’s Circumspection,” considers the pair of allegorical figures

an unfamiliar part of the cycle of the Virtues and the Vices. The small busts are sometimes even airbrushed out of diagrams of the fresco corpus.⁹⁸ The right figure is an image of a man from the waist up with a club. The left figure of the pair, the image of interest in this chapter, is the figure of a female from the waist up with a crown atop her head and a book in her left hand (Fig. 11). The female figure looks out at the viewer and has strange, club-like forms that protrude from her eyes. This figure is important to my discussion because, as suggested by Frojmovic, the meaning of the figure deviates from the interpretations of three other scholars – Andrew Ladis, Gosbert Schüssler, and Sven Georg Mieth – who have commented on these figures.⁹⁹ Frojmovic details how this pair of images presents “unusual iconography,” likely proposed to express a “semi-private message in a public space.”¹⁰⁰ “Semi-private” refers to the door’s location in a public space, yet it leads into a private space, Enrico Scrovegni’s palace. The other scholars who discuss these two figures agree on the “semi-private” message indicated by the north door. However, Frojmovic differs from the scholars in the identification of the figure. She connects the figure with Francesco da Barberino and forms a dynamic between Giotto’s figure and a similar figure designed by

⁹⁸ Frojmovic, “Giotto’s Circumspection,” 199.

⁹⁹ Ladis, “The Legend of Giotto’s Wit,” in *Giotto and the World of Early Italian Art*, ed. Andrew Ladis (New York: Garland, 1998), 245-60; Schüssler, “*Giottos visuelle Definition der ‘Spientia Saeculi’ in der Cappella Scrovegni zu Padua*,” in *Opere e giorni*, ed. K. Bergdolt and G. Bonsanti (Venice: Marsilio, 2001), 111-22; and Mieth, “*Per i due tondi*,” 15-20.

¹⁰⁰ Frojmovic, “Giotto’s Circumspection,” 198.

Francesco da Barberino, which requires an understanding of the two medieval optical theories, in order to correctly identify the figure as a personification of Circumspection.

Frojmovic insists that the Circumspection figure indicates a relationship between Giotto, Francesco da Barberino, and Petrus de Abano (Pietro d'Abano, Peter of Abano), through the two medieval optical theories. She states that the figure can be read iconographically, and that profound links exist to the “role of images in the public sphere, the role of the audience, and the relations between art, optics, physiognomy, and rhetoric.”¹⁰¹ The other scholars, Frojmovic explains, most notably Ladis, have incorrectly attributed blindness to the Circumspection figure in the Arena Chapel. She argues that the clubs or branch-like protrusions from the eyes do not represent blindness, as Ladis and the other scholars have suggested, but refer to the science of optics. Much of Frojmovic's reading is based on the only other figure that is depicted with “branch-like appendages” from the eyes. This other unique image is the personification of Circumspection in the *Documenta amoris* by Francesco da Barberino (b. 1264-d. 1348) (Fig. 12).¹⁰² As indicated by the reference to Giotto as the artist of the Arena Chapel, Francesco's work was published after the Arena Chapel was completed, 1314-15, however, Frojmovic suggests that Francesco conceived this

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 195.

¹⁰² Ibid, 201.

figure and concept long before, during the period of 1290-1309. Francesco's use of this figure, and the resemblance, might be Francesco's imitation or use of Giotto's image, thus leading to Frojmovic's theory being correct. This document also serves as one of the first contemporary references to Giotto as the artist of the Arena Chapel frescoes.¹⁰³ *Documenta amoris* is an illustrated didactic poem about how man can attain love through tending to the Virtues, composed in Italian with parallel Latin prose translation and commentary.¹⁰⁴ Although the hands of Circumspection are different from those of Giotto's figure, the images are strikingly similar. Francesco da Barberino depicted Circumspection in a literal way, as she is the one who "looks all around" (*circumspicit*) and uses this literal depiction of extramission in a metaphorical manner.

Both Giotto's and Francesco da Barberino's Circumspection figures indicate an elite level of meaning found in the Arena Chapel. One must understand the medieval concept of the extramission optical theory to recognize the figure as a visual depiction. One must also possess an understanding of the newly introduced intromission theory, which was known only to the elite, to fully grasp the complex meaning. However, the new, intellectual and university based theory, which came from the Arabic world (via Witelo), had not yet trickled down

¹⁰³ Basile, *Giotto*, 9.

¹⁰⁴ Kay Sutton, "The Lost 'Officiolum' of Francesco da Barberino Rediscovered," *The Burlington Magazine* 147:1224 (2005): 152.

to the general public, or even to all of the intellectuals, by the early-fourteenth century.

It can be claimed that both artists of the circumspection images, Francesco da Barberino and Giotto (or Giotto's advisors), understood optics beyond the theory of extramission and utilized the "old" optical theory (extramission) metaphorically. Francesco da Barberino was exposed to high education and a member of the intellectual society. Francesco da Barberino studied at the University of Padua while Giotto produced the Arena Chapel, from 1304 to 1309, and he can be associated with Giotto and his projects.¹⁰⁵ In Francesco da Barberino's *Documenta amoris*, he explains that he does not believe that *circumspicit* vision or extramission theory is correct.¹⁰⁶ Francesco da Barberino, like the educated elite and the advisors to Giotto, was aware of the "new" concept of optics, intromission. He explained that God could only see with a view of circumspection, or extramission theory. Francesco da Barberino and the educated elite of Padua were aware of the notion of intromission; Francesco da Barberino studied at the University of Padua while Peter of Abano was teaching optics to students of science and art alike, and presumably heard of Peter's theories.¹⁰⁷ Those same academics from Padua most likely influenced and advised Giotto on

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 153.

¹⁰⁶ Frojmovic, "Giotto's Circumspection," 201. English translation of passage from Francesco da Barberino's *Documenta amoris*.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 195.

the Arena Chapel fresco program. The fresco program is based on a wide range of texts. Giotto's advisor, or advisors, for the frescoes are unknown because it is rare for this kind of documentation to exist from this period.¹⁰⁸ However, many scholars today have speculated on Giotto's possible advisors, by suggestions of names and evidence for different theologians and scientists. In Claudio Bellinati's texts on the Arena Chapel frescoes, he theorizes that Altegrado de'Cattanei, a professor of law and archpriest of the cathedral of Padua, was the advisor, and this suggestion has appeared in numerous scholarly discourse since Bellinati examined the possibility.¹⁰⁹ The other male figure who presents the model chapel with Enrico Scrovegni in the *Last Judgment*, wears high-ranking clergy robes, may be a depiction of this hypothesized advisor, or of another unknown advisor.¹¹⁰ Whoever contributed to Giotto's complex cycle was clearly well versed in medieval concepts of sciences (including intromission) and theology, and was highly knowledgeable. Peter of Abano described how Giotto (which would most likely stem from Giotto's advisors knowledge) employed Peter's principles in his art.¹¹¹ Both Giotto and Francesco da Barberino utilize the

¹⁰⁸ Basile, *Giotto*, 13.

¹⁰⁹ Bellinati, *La Cappella di Giotto all'Arena (1300-1306)* (Padua [n.p.], 1967), 16-21; Bellinati, *Il Veneto e i giubilei: Contributo alla storia culturale e spirituale dell'evento in terra veneta, 1300-2000* (Padua: Il Poligrafo, 1999), 21-34; and Bellinati, *Nuovi studi sulla Cappella di Giotto all'Arena di Padova: 25 marzo 1303-2003* (Padua: Il Poligrafo, 2003). For other suggestions as to the identity of Giotto's advisor/s, see Basile, *Giotto*, 19 n. 20.

¹¹⁰ Basile, *Giotto*, 13-14.

¹¹¹ Frojmovic, "Giotto's Circumspection," 195.

“old” extramission model as a metaphor for the virtue of *circumspicit*. Thus, it is possible to claim that Giotto, through his possible advisors, was aware of the “new” intromission optical theory, as were the educated classes (Scrovegni and his guests). The general public, however, most likely did not have knowledge of the intromission theory until later, which created different dialogues and readings of the chapel’s fresco cycle for the late-medieval audiences based on education.

Enrico Scrovegni created the Arena Chapel as both a “public place of pilgrimage and as the family’s palace chapel and mausoleum,” and the reading of the fresco cycle is greatly influenced by class and thus optical theories. The general public could enter and see the fresco cycles, but the north door, as stated earlier, was restricted access and a “semi-private” setting. Derbes and Sandona refer to the public being able to enter multiple times throughout the liturgical year.¹¹² Since Padua was a university town, comparatively large numbers of residents were among the “educated elite.” In regard to the general and more exclusive “private” areas of the Arena Chapel, there were two different audiences seeing these frescoes. Class influenced where in the chapel a viewer would focus and the way in which the fresco cycle would be perceived. Visual perspective plays a role in how the fresco program was read. If a privileged guest of Enrico Scrovegni were led through the private door, they would have a different vantage point of the fresco cycle than a viewer entering the Arena Chapel as a public place, who would most likely focus on the impressive *Last Judgment* scene. By

¹¹² Derbes and Sandona, “Barren Metal,” 286.

focusing on the *Last Judgment*, the public's reading would have contextualized their impression in terms of damnation.

The privacy of one section of the space (the north door) is highlighted by the restrictive nature that is implied by the two allegorical busts on the north door. Frojmovic points out that the two busts guide the privileged viewers' eyes from the Circumspection figure to the audience's right, towards her counterpart.¹¹³ The Circumspection figure signals the viewer to the male figure with the club, then this male bust directs the eye to the north door. His club indicates that he is guarding the private entrance, and he gazes back at the Circumspection figure. A cyclical pattern of gazing is established between the viewer and the two busts. Further indicating the elite and restricted access of this threshold is the lack of a Latin inscription, which is seen in conjunction with the Virtue and the Vice figures throughout the fresco cycle. Hence, a knowledge and background of this figure and the content is required, even for those educated enough to understand Latin.

The female half figure, Circumspection, prompts a useful discussion of extramission and intromission optical theories in the early-fourteenth century when used in the context of the female figure representing an allegorical virtue, "circumspection." Francesco da Barberino's similar figure, his connection to Giotto, and his own description of his circumspection image, along with the rise in interest in optics at the University of Padua around the time of Giotto's Arena

¹¹³ Frojmovic, "Giotto's Circumspection," 198.

Chapel, lead to the distinct possibility that the figure represents corporeal vision, as Frojmovic has theorized. I contend that the message of circumspection can be seen as a warning against letting outside, evil forces bring harm, advising viewers to be aware, to be wary of the evil eye, and to avoid damnation. It also implies public and “semi-private” spaces and messages within the chapel through the Circumspection figure placed on north door and its reference to the “old” and “new” medieval optical theories.

Conclusion

Through a combination of the Arena Chapel scholars’ interpretations of the frescos with the chapel’s graffiti, a fresh analysis of the Arena Chapel appears, which adds to the corpus of scholarly work on Giotto’s Arena Chapel. A new element of the theme of optics, through the graffiti scratches on Hell and the connection to the belief in the Evil Eye, in combination with a lesser-discussed image in the restricted area of the north door, allow for a better understanding of how medieval viewers read the messages of Enrico Scrovegni, Giotto di Bondone, and Giotto’s possible advisors. As Basile mentions, viewers, upon entering the chapel, “were meant to feel directly involved and implicated.”¹¹⁴ The graffiti in the chapel, especially the scratch marks on the Devil and demons, show the audience was moved to converse with Giotto’s images.

¹¹⁴ Basile, *Giotto*, 319.

Chapter 3

ISSOGNE CASTLE

In Northern Italy's Aosta Valley, situated in the Turin province, Issogne Castle represents a valuable example of graffiti as conversation and historical significance.¹¹⁵ Though some have faded over time, thousands of inscriptions appear in the castle, which underwent an extensive reconstruction at the end of the fifteenth century. Additions were made to the courtyard, the large hall, and the chapel and each area was decorated with fresco cycles and ornate designs. After the reconstruction, the castle became a site for graffiti. Graffiti in the form of drawings and inscriptions occur on the walls, staircases, and ceilings, as well as on and around the frescoes in the courtyard and halls. A variety of languages are used in the inscriptions. Archeologists and archivists have documented and commented on hundreds of these findings. Giuseppe Giacosa was one of the first to record and decipher the inscriptions, followed by R. Forrer, who published *Spätgothische Wohnräume und Wandmalereien aus Schloss Issogne*, in 1896. Both Giacosa and Forrer focused on the courtyard area. The most comprehensive study of Issogne Castle graffiti appear a century later, when Omar Boretta's 1995 *I graffiti nel castello di Issogne in Valle d'Aosta* records 541 entries.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Issogne Castle is called a castle (*castello*), even though it is more closely related to a palace; it was built without walls or defensive fortifications. Edward Kremers, "History of the Apothecary Shop: A Bibliography: No.4 The Apothecary Shop of Castle Issogne," *Journal of the American Pharmaceutical Association* 12.3 (1923): 252.

¹¹⁶ Although other sources were published in the century between 1896 and 1995, Giacosa, Forrer, and Boretta have contributed the most significant works for the purposes of this thesis.

Fascinating aspects of late medieval and early modern society emerge through the study of Issogne Castle's graffiti. In this chapter, I will consider the graffiti and space by focusing on social stratification, cultural delineations, and class distinctions; this consideration will include identity, literacy, beliefs, and class distinctions and implications.

Location and Placement

The majority of scholarly discourse on the castle's graffiti focuses on the content of the inscription and not the location. However, the specific location of the graffiti contributes to its meaning and should be considered. As Mark Gardiner, in "Graffiti and their Use in Late Medieval England," advocates, the context of graffiti is important, "if the purpose of a graffiti is to be understood."¹¹⁷ Often a graffiti is placed in obscure locations, such as below eye-level or in secluded corners. Low traffic areas may have been intentionally chosen for the eyes of God or to seek saintly intercession. On the other hand, graffitiists who wrote in noticeable spaces sought a different effect. For example, painters' names inscribed on the Issogne Castle courtyard fresco cycle are intentionally placed on the first fresco to credit the artist. Both content and context of graffiti are important and can provide valuable historical information.

Graffiti as Documentation

Graffiti found in the courtyard help establish the date range of the reconstruction. The history of Issogne Castle, up until the reconstruction, is

¹¹⁷ Mark Gardiner, "Graffiti and their Use in Late Medieval England," in *Arts and Crafts in Medieval Rural Environment*, ed. Jan Klápšte and Petr Sommer (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 274.

documented. In 1399 Ibleto di Challant purchased Issogne Castle. When his son Francesco died in 1442 without a male heir, ten years of fighting ensued and Giacomo d'Aymaville inherited the castle in 1456 followed by his son Luigi. After Luigi d'Aymaville's death around 1490, his widow Countess Marguerite appointed Giorgio di Challant as overseer of the estate, in order to protect her son Filiberto's claim to the inheritance.¹¹⁸ Giorgio di Challant was an effective choice as he was a prominent societal figure who held respected political positions and was a patron of the arts.¹¹⁹

Giorgio di Challant organized and commissioned the reconstruction, however, the exact dates and artists responsible for the project are unknown. The frescoes are tentatively assigned a nineteen-year date range with the earliest date of rebuild suggested at 1480, and for the frescoes, 1487. The earliest date for the frescoes is 1487, given by Borettaz, who claims the restoration began as soon as Luigi d'Aymaville died in 1487, but insinuates that plans for the rebuild may have begun earlier. Steffi Roettgen, in *Italian Frescoes: The Flowering of the Renaissance 1470-1510* gives the beginning date of "around 1480" for the rebuild and "after 1488" for the frescoes, with an end date of the project in 1502.¹²⁰ The

¹¹⁸ Steffi Roettgen, *Italian Frescoes: The Flowering of the Renaissance 1470-1510*, trans. by Russell Stockman (New York: Abbeville, 1996), 333.

¹¹⁹ Abbé Henry, *Histoire Populaire: Religieuse et Civile de la Vallée d'Aoste*, tome I (Aoste: Imprimerie Valdotaïne, 1949), 304.

¹²⁰ Roettgen, *Italian Frescoes*.

latest date given to the fresco program is 1506, by Andreina Griseri in *Affreschi nel Castello di Issogne* and by Evelyn Welch in *Shopping in the Renaissance*.¹²¹

Each scholar indicates slightly different date ranges, which causes discrepancies.

Some of the earliest graffiti help answer these unknown questions. Three key examples are found in the courtyard entry porch of the castle. One provides information not found in the official records, and two others confirm names that were logged in the official records of a simultaneous project by Giorgio di Challant. The first, found on the fourth pillar under the portico entrance, is an inscription dated 1489 that states a mason, Jan de Valupe, received twenty florins for work on the castle: *1489. Jan de Valupe / a faict la cave de ce / chateaus pour / 20 florin*. Borettaz speculates that Jan de Valupe himself incised this with a metal point, though his name does not appear in any accounts.¹²² Thus, the graffito identifies a mason and a date, which suggests that work was in progress in 1489. The two other examples can be found on the right wall of the porch entrance, on the fresco that depicts the guardhouse scene: *Metre Etiene pintre; Metro Colin pintr*.¹²³ As Borettaz suggests, the names appear in official documentation: “The record of account provides some names for the work performed in 1494: Master Michael de Ecclesia, architect; Panthaleo de Lala and

¹²¹ Andreina Griseri, *Affreschi nel Castello di Issogne* (Milan: Cassa di Risparmio, 1972); Evelyn Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 67.

¹²² Omar Borettaz, *I graffiti nel castello di Issogne in Valle d'Aosta*. (Turin: Priuli & Verlucca, 1995), 27.

¹²³ Ibid, 55.

Nicola Longet, blacksmiths; Petrus, Collinus and Stephanus, painters; Jeninus Braye, carpentator; Bodichinus, glassmaker.”¹²⁴ “Collinus” and “Stephanus” are the Latinized versions of the French names Colin and Etienne. The “record of accounts” Borettaz refers to is the records of Saint Orso in Aosta, where after becoming prior in 1468, Giorgio di Challant began extensive reconstructions on the church and priory, and he hired a large number of builders, craftsmen, and artists. The laborers continued to work for him for over thirty years, presumably at both Saint Orso and Issogne Castle. These two inscriptions confirm the names of the two painters that appear in the documentation of workers of Giorgio di Challant’s other project. Borettaz also notes that the graffiti references the painters as “masters” and he considers them the “authors” of the frescoes. In agreement with Borettaz, Roettgen expounds on how these inscriptions credit the painters of the courtyard frescoes.¹²⁵ These graffiti could be referred to as artists’ signatures. Given the nature of the inscriptions, they can exist simultaneously as both graffiti and artists’ signatures. Borettaz dates the inscriptions to around the same time period and both are incised in French although “master” and “painter” are spelled differently. These two inscriptions show how spelling varied

¹²⁴ Ibid. “*Nel 1470 o poco dopo, allorché, verosimilmente, iniziarono i lavori di ristrutturazione a S. Orso, Giorgio di Challant assunse un gran numero di muratori, artigiani e artisti, che rimasero alle sue dipendenze per oltre trent’anni, occupati, a partire dagli ultimi anni ottanta del secolo, anche nel cantiere di Issogne. I registri dei conti tenuti dai procuratori del canonico ce ne forniscono alcuni nomi, relativamente almeno ai lavori eseguiti a partire dal 1494: magister Michael de Ecclesia, architetto; Panthaleo de Lala e Nicola Longet, fabbri; Petrus, Collinus e Stephanus, pittori; Jeninus Braye, carpentator; Bodichinus, verrerius.*”

¹²⁵ Rottegen, *Italian Frescoes*, 333.

throughout the graffiti. This was common for the medieval and early modern periods as there was no unified orthography. These variations may indicate that two different writers incised these graffiti. The inscriptions are located on the guardhouse fresco, which is often cited as the first in the fresco cycle.

Documented people known to be living in the castle at the time support the dates that are found in the graffiti. Roettgen cites documents that confirm after 1487 the widow Countess Marguerite della Chambre's primary residence was Issogne Castle. Additionally, Charles VIII, King of France, stayed at the castle in 1494.¹²⁶ These facts suggest that the majority of the reconstruction must have been accomplished by 1487, and the whole project was nearly complete, if not finished, by the time of the king's stay. Borettaz' hypothesized date of 1487 or earlier is supported by the residency of the countess in beginning in 1487. This chapter analyzes examples of graffiti at Issogne Castle that can serve as historical record, such as the inscription that states: *Le 28 d'octobre 1535/ la messe a reste de dire/ a Geneve*; "On 28 October 1535 the Mass is forbidden / in Geneva."¹²⁷ These examples will allow for a better understanding of the social concerns of the castle's inhabitants and guests through the sixteenth century, the "golden age" of Issogne Castle, which occurred after the reconstruction.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ I wish to thank Dr. Markus Cruse for this translation.

Graffiti on the Courtyard Frescoes

The names Jan de Valupe, Colin, and Etienne in the courtyard are accompanied by more graffiti, which appear on and around frescoes that illuminate middle-and lower-class life. The courtyard loggias, the entry area of the castle, contain unique fresco scenes that portray fifteenth-century market shops. The fresco scenes and the graffiti inscribed on the frescoes will be used to discuss issues of class and space. A guardhouse or armory, a bakery/butcher shop, produce stalls, a tailor shop, an apothecary, and a salami-cheese shop (*pizzicagnolo*) all form the courtyard entry porch and loggias fresco cycle (Fig. 13-17). Wooden benches appear beneath the frescos of the entry porch and loggias, which encourage the space to function as a social area. Traditional fresco and tempera techniques produced the wall murals.¹²⁸ Modern-day scholars consider these exterior courtyard scenes to be rare depictions of medieval everyday life. Depictions of quotidian activities are highly unusual for frescoes and only found in pictorial medieval calendars, known as “Labors of the Months.”¹²⁹ Frescoes at the time usually presented sacred narratives and allegories, such as the Arena Chapel fresco program that include the *Last Judgment* scene and the Circumspection figure, both discussed in chapter one. Issogne Castle’s courtyard serves as a liminal area within the castle as an exterior,

¹²⁸ Roettgen, *Italian Frescoes*, 332.

¹²⁹ Bridget Ann Henisch, *The Medieval Calendar Year* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), vii.

representational space. In *Shopping in the Renaissance*, Evelyn Welch notes, “The frescoes...were painted in the portico in front of the castle’s kitchen and dining rooms, liminal spaces between the outer areas designed for servants and soldiers and the secure inner courtyard where the family resided.”¹³⁰ The courtyard functions as a multi-purpose area, a thoroughfare for Issogne Castle’s personnel, servants bustling by carry food, delivery people moving things to and from the pantry and cellars along with a place for the Challant family to receive guests and an overall social, “public,” less intimate space for large gatherings. Although it was more informal and a “public” space, it was only used by guests of the castle, thus not public in the sense that anyone could enter.

The courtyard frescoes differ thematically from the interior paintings and décor in the “private” sections of the castle. The focus changes to rich patterns and textures, such as velvet and faux marble, and scenes of hunting, falconry, and the Challant coat-of-arms. The paintings and graffiti in the representational “open” area, in contrast to the interior halls, suggest class distinctions in the different areas of the castle. Issogne Castle most likely hosted guests from a range of social standings, such as the nobility, gentry, merchants, clergy, and pilgrims. Class developed as a key theme in the castle’s frescoes, to display the family’s affluence and attest to the family’s high social class status.

Welch discusses the Issogne Castle courtyard fresco cycle and suggests that moral lessons on proper and improper business conduct are main concerns in

¹³⁰ Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance*, 67.

the series.¹³¹ She claims that the images of the guardhouse and the produce stands depict disorder to illustrate examples of poorly conducted business, and that the orderly apothecary image shows how to appropriately manage a place of business. The disorderly guardhouse scene depicts a brawl amidst gambling and drinking. In the produce stalls scene, women and men engage in inappropriate acts that include sexual innuendos with fruit, and overall the scene lacks order. The “chaotic” images seem to have a comedic or ironic tone. In contrast, the apothecary depicts order with labeled and organized vessels and an attendant bookkeeping. If these frescoes are morality lessons, as Welch argues, then perhaps they are meant to demonstrate to broad audiences on how business in the marketplace should be conducted. Medieval frescoes often contain nonverbal instructions on morality, which would appeal and apply to all levels of society. This is supported by the fresco cycle’s placement in the most “public,” least restricted area in the castle. The marketplace was an everyday place associated with the lower classes so it may also indicate how lower classes were viewed in fifteenth-century society. The graffiti that appear on the frescoes comment on the episodes depicted in the frescoes. The remarks discuss members of the lowest stratum, such as the beggar, spinner, and prostitute. Although the guests, the presumable graffitists, were not necessarily members of the nobility, the Challant family, in particular Giorgio di Challant, aimed to emphasize the family’s affluence through their castles and the castle’s decoration. The courtyard depicted

¹³¹ Ibid, 65-70. Welch also focuses on issues of security and sexuality.

everyday marketplace scenes, which are not associated with nobility, to highlight the interior halls space as aristocratic in contrast.

Social stratification is referenced in the frescoes and graffiti throughout the castle. Boretta notes references found in the inscriptions: *Ladri sono i sarti*, “Tailors are thieves,” which appears in the tailor shop; *Chi serve li signori more al ospidale*, “He who serves the lords dies in hospital,” which is found in the salami-cheese shop scene. Both phrases concern the lower classes.¹³² The marketplace frescoes depict commonplace activities, which prompt conversations about the lower classes to form. Shopping in the marketplace was considered “beneath” the members of the nobility, their servants and staff members would buy goods for the households.¹³³ Thus, these everyday scenes allow for a sharp contrast between the outside, liminal space of the courtyard and the inside, aristocratic Challant family halls.

The Apothecary

Analyses of the graffiti in juxtaposition with the fresco scenes they appropriate indicate how late-fifteenth century and sixteenth-century viewers interpreted the marketplace images. Social commentary on rich and poor and the importance of charity appear in the apothecary, the “orderly” scene (Fig. 15). The scene contains four figures: Two male figures are located behind the counter.

¹³² Boretta, “*Anche i muri parlano. I graffiti del castello*,” in *Il Castello Di Issogne In Valle D’Aosta: Diciotto Secoli Di Storia E Quarant’Anni Di Storicismo*, ed. Sandra Barberi. (Turin: Umberto Allemandi & C., 1999), 154. I wish to thank Dr. Markus Cruse for help with these translations.

¹³³ Welch, *Shopping*, 68.

One of these two male figures stands on the left side of the counter, writing. The second male figure behind the counter accepts money from a female figure as she purchases goods in front of the counter. The fourth figure, a third male figure, is pictured sitting on the ground in the right corner, dressed in rags and absorbed in the menial task of crushing herbs. An impressive and detailed array of labeled storage jars and dry goods are on display behind the counter. Each of the four figures represent a different class that would have been found in a late-medieval marketplace. Class distinction is emphasized by the attached graffiti.

Mercantilism in a marketplace setting, similar to purchasing in the marketplace, was “beneath” members of the nobility. Small-scale trade or sales were unacceptable business for a “gentleman.” Only wholesale of expensive items was deemed honorable. Exceptions arise in the case of individuals working as apothecaries: in a sixteenth-century Venetian nobility application, it was acceptable that “the applicant’s father and grandfather had weighed out wax with their own hands when serving customers.”¹³⁴ However, serving salami to customers, or other service-oriented activities, was not acceptable behavior for the higher classes. Thus, the apothecary seems to be a slightly elevated small-scale business venture and makes for an example to illustrate a “moral” business in the fresco cycle.

Discussion of the class status of the apothecary attendants is of particular interest to scholars of late medieval and early modern medical practices. A 1922

¹³⁴ Welch, *Shopping*, 69.

meeting of scholars discussed the history of pharmacy practices resulted in an article titled “History of the Apothecary Shop: A Bibliography,” by Edward Kremers. The resulting article discusses the designations of the status and titles of the figures behind the counter in Issogne Castle’s apothecary fresco. Kremers stresses that Forrer (one of the scholars used in the article) named this figure a physician. Forrer claims the cap that covers one of the two figure’s ears signifies that he was a physician, which then makes the figure who interacts with the customer his assistant. In another scholar’s work discussed by Kremers, *Geschichte der Pharmacie* (“History of Pharmacy”) by Hermann Schelenz, the man with the cap that covers his ears is named “master apothecary,” and the man who uses the scale is called the “first assistant or prescriptionist.”¹³⁵ Kremer’s discussion focuses on the title and job description of the “master apothecary,” who is depicted as writing what these scholars consider to be prescriptions, but could also be bookkeeping. My reading, however, focuses on the fact that in both Forrer’s and Schelenz’ interpretations, the figure who interacts with the customer, handles the money, and weighs out medicine, is referred to as the assistant. Direct physical business transactions with patrons indicate class and make a distinction between the “master” and “assistant.” This class distinction (mainly through education) still exists today in pharmacies. The pharmacist fills prescriptions in the back and wears a white coat, which differentiates the pharmacist from technicians (or “assistants”). The “physician” or “master

¹³⁵ Kremers, “History of the Apothecary Shop,” 252-54.

apothecary” figure is shown writing and his literacy suggests higher education and also implies a higher-class status. The patron in this fresco, a woman of the “urban elite,” hands a large coin to the seller, which creates a narrative of a direct transaction between patron and attendant. The assistant’s interaction with the woman and engagement in a monetary transaction implies his class and education to be lower than the capped man who writes.

Welch claims that only one member of the “urban elite” appears in the entire courtyard fresco cycle, in the apothecary scene. This figure is surrounded by graffiti that comments on class and charity. A female figure, characterized as “elite” based on her clothing, “high, belted waist and long sleeves” is shown standing in the center of the foreground, in front of the scales of the apothecary shop.¹³⁶ Also indicative of the figure’s presumed class are inscriptions of Biblical quotes that surround her, including Ecclesiastes 7:12 and a number passages from the Psalms. The Psalms passages condemn the rich and empathize with the poor. Welch’s use of the term “urban elite” to describe this figure is ambiguous, as it is unclear if she refers to a member of the nobility or of the upper-middle class. Nevertheless, she believes the figure is of a higher status than the other figures depicted in the marketplace scenes and argues that the figure is placed in the shop to further highlight its orderly state. The association of the figure with currency, in the shape of a large coin, also suggests the female’s class.

¹³⁶ Welch, *Shopping*, 67.

The choices of Biblical passages are commentary on the juxtaposition of the “elite” woman with the beggar figure, who is located in the lower-right corner (Fig. 15). Considerable amounts of graffiti focus on this beggar, who is a figure of a *pestapepe*. Two of the at least four passages that surround the “elite” woman discuss the poor: Ps. 73:21, which is inscribed in Latin on the fresco: “Let not the humble be turned away with confusion: the poor and needy shall praise thy name.”¹³⁷ Also, Ps. 74:8-9, which again appears in Latin on the fresco: “For God is the judge. One he putteth down, and another he lifteth up...,” this passage reflects the juxtaposition of the rich and poor seen in this fresco. Charity and alms were an integral aspect of pious medieval Christian life, and were given in return for prayers of the redemption of the donor’s soul. Similar to the motivation behind Enrico Scrovegni’s patronage of the Arena Chapel, money, given to the church, could lead to salvation. The audience understood the contrast between rich and poor and commented on the issue of poverty and charity through graffiti.

The *pestapepe* figure represents the poor within the fresco and the graffiti on the figure suggest how society viewed the poor. *Pestapepe* loosely translates as “one who crushes (or pounds) pepper.”¹³⁸ His attire proposes that he belongs to the lowest stratum of society since he is dressed in rags and has only one tattered shoe. The job of a *pestapepe* was considered unskilled and was a task

¹³⁷ All biblical quotes are taken from the *Douay-Rheims Catholic Bible*.

¹³⁸ *Cassell’s Italian Dictionary* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1967), 373. *Pepe* means pepper, and *pesta* is derived from the word *pestare*, to pound, grind, or crush.

given to the poor as an act of charity.¹³⁹ Borettaz observes that the figure's face and body have been repeatedly targeted by a large number of unsympathetic graffiti, such as: *Pista o poltron*, lazy man or coward; *Pesta gozzo*, where *pesta* means pound or crush, and *gozzo* is defined as meaning the medical term "goiter," or a number of other definitions, all with negative connotations.¹⁴⁰ "Goiter" is further defined as "an enlargement of the thyroid gland...due to lack of iodine in the diet." More likely, the phrases refer to unflattering medieval slang. These two phrases, both repeated twice, are most likely from different hands because they are different sizes and dimensions. *Pesta gozzo* is inscribed on two different places on the fresco, one appears next to the figure and the other is on the figure's left forearm. The two inscriptions are both incised with a metal point. A third inscription that refers to the beggar reads: *In stato tal non mi lasciar morir*, "In such a state do not let me die," and is also incised with a metal point.¹⁴¹ This graffito is an appeal to the viewer, and ties to the Psalms passages as a plea for charity. Another graffito about the *pestapepe* is: *Che strazio io sono*, "What torture (or agony) I am (in)." The graffiti show the late medieval and early modern opinions on the poor of charity and aversion.

¹³⁹ Welch, *Shopping*, 67.

¹⁴⁰ Borettaz, *I graffiti*, 53; *Cassell's Italian Dictionary*, 229, 753. Defined as "goitre," the British spelling of the word goiter.

¹⁴¹ I wish to thank Dr. Markus Cruse for help with this translation.

Beggars and the poor earned little respect in society and this is mirrored in the fresco's graffiti. Graffiti appear directly on the beggar figure, where the graffiti about the "urban elite" figure only appears around her body. As seen in the Vice and the Virtue images in the Arena Chapel, the "urban elite" figure receives more respect. A metal point produces the majority of the *pestapepe* graffiti. This type of incision is argued as being the most intimate and violent method of graffiti, where the act moves "into the world of the painting," to pierce and physically alter the work, as examined by Véronique Plesch in "Memory on the Wall: Graffiti on Religious Wall Paintings."¹⁴² Outside of the *pestapepe*, no other figure's face or body is violated in such a way except a "fighting prostitute" in the guardhouse scene (which will be analyzed later in this chapter). The *pestapepe*'s figure is low, closer to the reach of graffitiists' marks, and the low placement of the figure mirrors the low social position of the figure. The graffiti show a mix of sympathy and aversion to this unfortunate figure. Such is the fascination with this character that he is referred to in a graffito on another fresco in the courtyard. The apothecary shop serves as a paradigm for how graffiti should be read within its context. When the fresco and graffiti are read together an understanding of how late medieval and early modern viewers read the frescoes emerges.

¹⁴² Véronique Plesch, "Memory on the Wall: Graffiti on Religious Wall Paintings," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 32:1 (2002): 182.

Gender Roles in the Marketplace Scenes

The female figures in the frescoes acquire a large amount of graffiti. Figures identified by graffiti as *filatrice* (“spinners”) appear in numerous frescoes.¹⁴³ One female figure in the salami-cheese shop and some of the female figures in the produce stalls image hold a spindle or distaff object, which identify them as “spinners” (Fig. 14, 16-17). On the fresco adjacent to the apothecary scene, which depicts a salami-cheese shop, a female figure sits on bench in the left corner of the image. She holds the distaff/spindle object in her left hand, while behind a counter located in the center of the scene, which contains an array of cheeses, a customer points to a large bowl to get the clerk’s attention, and dried meats hang on the wall behind the counter. Three lengthy inscriptions are written next to the female figure situated in the left corner of the fresco (Fig. 17). The first inscription reads: *Le siñore pasando / per la piasa vedendo / le putane a filar dicendo...*, “ladies passing by are surprised to see prostitutes spinning.”¹⁴⁴ A contrast between ladies (*siñore*) and prostitutes (*putane*) is made, and the fact that prostitutes engage in spinning is possibly being referenced. The second inscription reads: *Una signora in pasando dice / au le putane filon. / Subito l’an fato risposta: le signore / ano levato il pane et bisonia filare / ce volemo maniare*, again using *signora* (lady) and *signore* (ladies) in contrast to *putane filon*. The

¹⁴³ Roettgen, *Italian Frescoes*, 336-37.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 337.

third inscriptions states: *Io filo ma filo con ma al e 3 cento io fillo, non ò ancora / coperto il fuso, io piango del mio marito...*, the last five words state, “I weep for my husband.”¹⁴⁵ Each of the three verses uses the words *filar* (or *filare*) and *filo*. *Filare* is “to spin” and *filo* is “thread.”¹⁴⁶ Thus, the graffitists view the figure as a “*filatrice*,” someone who spins thread. Roettgen interprets these inscriptions to mean that the *filatrice* is being identified as a prostitute.¹⁴⁷ The last of the three inscriptions dedicated to the salami-cheese “spinner” describe an imagined romance between her and the *pestapepe* character portrayed in the apothecary scene, presumably the husband she “weeps for.”¹⁴⁸

In addition to the salami-cheese shop, the produce stalls fresco includes six female figures, three of which clearly hold these distaff/spindle objects. In ancient and medieval societies, these two symbols denoted the “status of respectable housewives and diligent spinners.”¹⁴⁹ In the produce stalls scene, the female figure on the far right holds a ball of yarn while a man grasps her knee with one hand and feels a melon with the other. Three female figures throughout the scene hold the spindle/distaff object: In the right-hand corner a woman sits

¹⁴⁵ See Boretta, *I graffiti*, 62, for the entire third inscription.

¹⁴⁶ Cassell's *Italian Dictionary*, 199-200.

¹⁴⁷ Roettgen, *Italian Frescoes*, 337.

¹⁴⁸ Boretta, *I graffiti*, 62, 43: “probabile collegamento con la *filatrice* di questo affresco ed il *pezzente dell'affresco dello*.”

¹⁴⁹ Welch, *Shopping*, 67.

and fondles a braid of onions and has this object tucked under her left side; towards the center of the scene a woman turned to a man in red are both situated behind a large basket of leafy-greens on the ground and a bundle of fruits on a table, and hold a similar object prominently displayed in her left hand, while her right hand reaches over to grasp a fruit or flower stem that the man in red holds out and their hands touch; and the third figure, in the middle of the next group of figures (to the right of the man in red) a female figure holds the hand of a man who wears yellow to her right, while he fondles a pear with his other hand and she fondles grapes with her other hand and her spindle/distaff object is tucked under her left arm. The woman holding the ball of yarn and the three female figures with the spindle/distaff object interact with men in potentially sexual, inappropriate manners. Thus, this spindle/distaff object and the ball of yarn are likely used ironically to contrast respectable women with women of ill repute. Next to the female figure to the left of the scene who fondles a braid of onions, in large letters, the colloquial, rude slang French word *foutre* is incised.¹⁵⁰ Overall, the interactions in the market scene do not appear to be virtuous, appropriate encounters for “housewives” and the graffitiists seem to align with this reading.

The spindle/distaff object may be capable of identification of a woman as both extremes: the “virgin” or the “whore.” An overlap of symbols that distinguishes spinners as housewives or prostitutes is seen in earlier time periods

¹⁵⁰ Ruth Mazo Karras, *Sexuality in Medieval Europe: doing unto others* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 18. “‘Screw’ seems to be the closest equivalent, since ‘foutre’ was definitely colloquial...”

as well. Scholars of the ancient world find spinning symbols iconographic of women in ancient art, as either *hetaira* (prostitutes) or as wives, based on other contextual clues.¹⁵¹ Although these symbols and the “spinner” title may connote the women referred to as “prostitutes,” it might be a reference to “loose women,” as opposed to women who actually have sex for money. A conflation of the prostitute with the “loose woman” occurred in the medieval period since there was no place in medieval society for a sexually active, single female who did not actually engage in prostitution.¹⁵²

A figure of a “prostitute” is also identified in scholarly discourse that addresses the guardhouse fresco, and the identification of the figure as a “prostitute” is dependent upon a graffito inscription (Fig. 13). The scene features weapons and armor hanging on the wall, which signifies the space as a guardhouse or armory, along with a long bench with ten seated figures, where four of the figures have their backs to the viewer. To the far right of the bench an altercation is depicted between two men and a third figure whose back faces the viewer. The third figure has been identified as a woman, though it is difficult to determine the gender. The three figures are situated in a triangular composition. At the top of the triangle is a figure of a man in a green garment that stands behind the table and wields a heavy object. His arm is midair as he presumably

¹⁵¹ Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz, “Sex for Sale? Interpreting Erotica in the Havana Collection” in *Greek Prostitutes in the Ancient Mediterranean, 800 BCE–200 CE*, ed. A. Glazebrook and M. M. Henry, (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 2011), 136-37.

¹⁵² Karras, *Sexuality*, 104.

attempts to break up the struggle, which occurs between the other two figures.

The second figure, situated closest to the viewer, pulls the third figure's head down and raises a dagger (or short sword) to his head. Recent debate exists over the gender of the figure with the weapon. She is frequently identified as female, and she is also referred to as a prostitute.

Most likely this figure is not a woman, but an inscription that appears on the fresco, on the left elbow of the figure, identifies her/him as a prostitute: *Frons / meret/ricis / ficta est tibi / noldi visis / erubescere*, "A prostitute's look is false to you; you will be shamed by that which is seen."¹⁵³ "*Meretricis*" translated from Latin is "prostitute" or "harlot." One of the medieval terms for a female prostitute was *meretrix*, as Ruth Mazo Karras, in *Sexuality in Medieval Europe: doing unto others* explains.¹⁵⁴ This graffito identifies the figure as female and as a prostitute.

Thus, the graffito label of *meretricis* most likely is the origination of the figure's identification as a prostitute in all of the descriptions and discussions about the guardhouse thereafter, as the details in the fresco suggests otherwise. For instance, Borettaz captions, "A prostitute sitting in the midst of soldiers at a tavern table," when he describes the scene, which indicates the Latin word has influenced his interpretation of the figure.¹⁵⁵ This figure, with his/her back to the

¹⁵³ I wish to thank Catilin Deegan for this translation.

¹⁵⁴ Karras, *Sexuality*, 104.

¹⁵⁵ Borettaz, *I graffiti*, 43.

viewer, wears a long, dress-like garment and acts in a violent, immoral way.

Bruno Chionetti, in *Storia quotidiana nell'Italia del '400*, claims that the “fighting woman” is actually a man by the loosely hanging mantle, which creates the illusion of a woman’s dress.¹⁵⁶ Furthermore, Chionetti explains that the figure also wears a brigandine with rivets and that his/her hair is middle length, which was fashionable for men in the late-medieval period. The length of hair is too short for a woman, and no woman, except for a very young girl, would be seen in public with loose hair. In agreement with Chionetti’s argument, all of the women in the courtyard frescoes wear some kind of head covering, except this figure. Although it seems that the two figures that brawl have tossed their hats to the ground, the hat still would not allow this figure to be identified as a female. The evidence in the fresco does not support the graffito’s identification of a “prostitute.”

In addition to the inscriptions on the “prostitute” figure, scratches and slashes have been made vertically and horizontally across the figure’s body. A parallel emerges between the scratches on the “prostitute” figure and the Devil and evil figures of the *Last Judgment* and the Vices in chapter one. Both instances indicate the viewers’ responses motivated by what occurs in the scene. A man wearing a green striped tunic and a man with a feathered cap in the guardhouse scene are also victims of scratchings. I speculate the markings that appear on these figures are reactions to the figures’ immoral behavior. One man

¹⁵⁶ Bruno Chionetti and Marco Vignola, ed., *Storia quotidiana nell'Italia del '400* (Compagnia de lo albero bianco, 2009), 29.

drinks while the other man gambles. In the Middle Ages, stripes were coded as signifiers of evil.¹⁵⁷ Even though other figures in the scene participate in immoral acts as well, perhaps the placement and accessibility of these defaced figures allowed them to receive such slashes.

Commentary on societal views of women, and particularly of women in the workplace, is suggested by the cases of the *filatrice* and the “prostitute” graffiti. A sense of undesirability surrounds the female figures. Prostitution is one of the few female jobs listed in the Italian employment surveys discussed by David Herlihy, especially in the accounts dating after 1300.¹⁵⁸ It is important to keep in mind that the graffitists who name these women as “spinners” and “prostitutes” incised or wrote (either with metal points to incise or wrote on the surface with graphite, “*sanguigna*,” or other materials) centuries after they were produced. Similarly to these graffitists, we interpret the frescoes from different temporal viewpoints. It is hard to stay unbiased and abstain from using modern concepts for an analysis of an earlier time period. These inscriptions are significant because they indicate how viewers over the centuries have identified the figures in the frescoes. An identification of *filatrice* or *meretricis* has lasted through the centuries and has influenced countless successive readings, even though they are evidently incorrect. They suggest how lower-class working

¹⁵⁷ Michel Pastoureau, *The Devil's Cloth*, trans. Jody Gladding (Columbia, Columbia University Press, 2001).

¹⁵⁸ Herlihy, *Women*, 87.

women and sexually active single women were viewed and chastised in society, throughout the late medieval and early modern periods.

“Gossip is Evil:” Lower Class Space Inside the Castle

Graffiti of the courtyard frescoes converse about views on the lower classes and within the castle halls different class discussions emerge. Within the interior halls, differentiations in space are seen. Restrictions to various floors and rooms appear. Function and restriction of the space sways the conversations produced by the graffiti. The service staircase, which has access to all of the floors, holds utilitarian function, presumably for servants use. An inscription warning of the dangers of gossip is placed above the second floor (*secondo piano*) door, which connects to the service staircase and leads down to the main service area on the ground floor (Fig. 18). The inscription reads: *Tous ceulx que mal dise d'alutruy et rapporte, n'entre ceans, nous luy deffendons l'apporte, car que d'austruy mal dira le diable l'enpourtera*, “Let all those who say and report evil of others enter not within; we forbid him the door, for he who will say evil of others will be carried away by the devil.”¹⁵⁹ The second floor is the top level and is the most privileged area of the castle. The floor contains the bedrooms and private areas of the Issogne Castle residents. Boretta refers to the location of this inscription, although he does not analyze the social implications.¹⁶⁰ The staircase

¹⁵⁹ I wish to thank Markus Cruse for his expertise and translation of this inscription.

¹⁶⁰ Boretta, *I graffiti*, 53. He explains that the inscription is placed in the staircase leading down to the “*servizio con quella principale*,” the main service area.

acts as a social divider between the second level and a service area, which suggests the intended audience for the graffito.

The placement of the graffito and the use of a vernacular language, as opposed to Latin, imply that the graffito is directed at lower-class domestic workers. Lower-class individuals that worked in the castle would have utilized this staircase, and so the inscription might be directed at the servants and domestic workers. The service staircase is clearly for “service” use since it leads down to what Borettaz names the “main service area,” which includes two “small stoves” (*petit poêle*), a ground floor pantry, “rooms above the cellar” (*membre au-dessus du cellier*), and a kitchen/laundry room (*cuisine de la buanderie*). The inscription is written in colloquial French, which would have been understood by the majority of people who lived and worked in the castle in the time period. Issogne Castle had a strong connection to France, as did the Aosta Valley. French is still an official language of the area, alongside Italian.

The reference to gossip and evil in the inscription further supports that it was intended for those who utilized the service staircase. The first line, “Let all those who say and report evil of others,” describes the act of gossip. One might assume the warning against gossip is meant primarily for a female audience, but gossip transcends gender and can be used to illuminate class distinctions. Although society has feminized gossip, gossip is not solely the province of women.¹⁶¹ Men gossiped significantly in the late medieval and early modern

¹⁶¹ Chris Wickham, “Gossip and Resistance Among the Medieval Peasantry,” *Past & Present* 160 (1998): 15.

periods, evidenced by the “recorded gossip” of court cases and the conversations of businessmen on the streets.¹⁶² The inscription’s reference to gossip, as well as evil (*mal*), and Hell or the devil (*le diable*), connects it to witchcraft and superstition, which were associated with lower-class ritual behavior. This connection further indicates lower-class workers to be the intended audience of the warning. The reference to evil parallels to the Arena Chapel graffiti, by warning that speaking evil will send the gossip-spreader to Hell.

The proverbial tone and use of sanguine also suggests the intended audience. The graffito has an imperfect rhyme scheme (aa/bb, with the last b slightly off) and partially shares the symmetry found in a proverb. Proverbs were used as a way to receive instruction and overall were highly used throughout literature in the medieval and early modern periods.¹⁶³ Sanguine, a reddish chalk used in drawing, was utilized to produce this proverbial message. Red color on a neutral wall makes the graffito noticeable. The use of sanguine connects the graffito to book and print culture, as red ink was used in medieval manuscripts for rubrication, which highlights headings, running titles, moral commentary, and initials. The term “rubrication” is derived from the Latin *rubrica*, “red earth,” and it was a critical step in manuscript production, as it marked the beginning and end

¹⁶² Alexander Cowan, “Gossip and Street Culture in Early Modern Venice,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 12 (2008): 322-26.

¹⁶³ Grace Frank, “Proverbs in Medieval Literature,” *Modern Language Notes* 58:7 (1943): 508-15.

of sections.¹⁶⁴ A member of the managerial staff, the clergy, the upper-middle class or nobility could have written the inscription for a general audience, but the location above a door that leads to a service staircase and the proverbial style suggest the graffito was intended for the lower-class workers.

The location of this “gossip is evil” inscription indicates it may be intended for a lower-class audience, however, linguistically, the passage was most likely written by an educated person. A member of the managerial staff or of the clergy would have possessed the level of literacy needed to write the inscription. Generally in the sixteenth century, servants could not write so it was unlikely a servant wrote the graffito. As in the marketplace, many occupations required a certain level of literacy. For example, a managerial staff member of a castle such as Issogne Castle would be expected to write out accounts and take inventory. A member of the clergy, due to the moral implications of the message “gossip is evil,” also may have written the inscription and would have also known how to write. From a linguistic standpoint, the French in the graffito has uneven subject-verb agreements: “*tous ceulx*” is plural while “*dise*,” “*entre*,” and “*luy*” are singular. The spelling in the passage is inconsistent, such as “*lapporte*” combined into one word when it is usually “*la porte*,” but has been assimilated with the verb “*apporte*,” which showcases the previously mentioned lack of unified orthography found in Middle Ages and early modern periods. The combination of words such as “*lapporte*” suggests a high level of education since it mimics the

¹⁶⁴ Carl Zigrosser, “The Philip S. Collins Collection of Mediaeval Illuminated Manuscripts,” *Philadelphia Museum of Art Bulletin* 58:275 (1962): 6.

way words are formed in Latin. Humanists frequently formed words in a similar manner to that of Latin, to exhibit their knowledge.¹⁶⁵ The linguistic style also suggests that the graffitist was educated in northern France, because the graffito is inscribed in the northern French print style and, thus, indicates the writer to be an outsider from another linguistic community. The graffitist possessed knowledge of Latin but chose to write in French, which would be understood by a wider audience.

Inside Issogne Castle: Aristocratic Space

Utilizing the elaborate floor plans from Sandra Barberi's *Il Castello Di Issogne in Valle D'Aosta* as a guide, the floors and rooms of Issogne Castle can be used to indicate class delineations, as the rooms contain different types of graffiti dependent on the function of a given space.¹⁶⁶ Within the domestic areas of the castle an aristocratic space is developed through rich patterns, scenes of noble leisure activities, the Challant family heraldic devices, and graffiti that name members of the nobility; clear distinctions appear between the areas for the family and guests versus the service areas. Issogne Castle, originally built in 1151, was altered in 1400, and modernized into an elegant family estate around 1490.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ I wish to thank Corine Schleif for her guidance and comments on this fact.

¹⁶⁶ Sandra Barberi, *Il Castello Di Issogne in Valle D'Aosta: Diciotto Secoli di Storia e Quarant'Anni di Storicismo* (Turin: Umberto Allemandi & C., 1999), 157-60. All titles of the rooms, in Italian and French, come from these floor plans, the French is taken from the castle's inventory of 1565, according to the transcript of F.G. Frutaz, 1963.

¹⁶⁷ Roettgen, *Italian Frescoes*, 332-33.

Canon Giorgio di Challant assumed control of the reconstruction in 1490. The reconstruction included the courtyard with a famous wrought-iron pomegranate fountain in addition to the marketplace frescoes mentioned earlier. Giorgio di Challant's reconstruction transformed Issogne Castle to an eloquent estate.

In addition to the courtyard, the ground floor (*piano terreno*) houses the service area and a large hall, all of which have divided areas for service use. The service area includes a pantry (*dispensa*) along with specialized “*cabinets*” for apothecary supplies and seafood (*coquilles*), among other amenities. The service area also includes jail cells, a falconry room, and a kitchen. The kitchen is divided into two sections, which consists of three large fireplaces. Of the two sections, one was for the “masters” and the other was intended for servant use. A dining room is connected to the kitchen by a hatch, for service use, and is also accessible through the courtyard porch, as the family's and guests' entrance. The ground floor contains the greatest concentration of service areas and quarters, and, thus, the most explicit demarcation between the upper and lower classes within the castle.

In contrast to the marketplace fresco scenes and the graffiti that appear on them, the ground floor also contains a large hall with a different purpose and class delineation than the courtyard, which is suggested by the frescoes and graffiti in the hall. The large hall was an area for the family and prominent guests, and it is found on the north side of the castle near the main staircase that leads to the upper floors. This hall has been described as the “Great Hall,” a parlor, the “Baronial

Hall,” and the “Hall of Justice.”¹⁶⁸ Reflected by the modern designation of “hall” and use of the word “parlor,” the room was most likely multifunctional. Rich, dark wood covers the floor, ceiling, and benches. A stone fireplace at the far end of the room dominates the space. Above the fireplace, the Challant family coat-of-arms (which features a griffon and a lion flanking each side of the shield) is prominently displayed.

The walls of the “Baronial Hall” are adorned with frescoes that feature the leisure activities of the nobility, which indicate the space to be intended for upper-class use. In the hall, the frescoes display what was valued and appropriate secular decoration for a noble estate: falconry, hunting, scenes with birds, ships, landscapes of the Italian countryside, the Vèrres Castle, Jerusalem, Paris (France), and *The Judgment of Paris*. The frescoes also indicate that the Baronial Hall was restricted to prominent guests due to the aristocratic nature of the imagery. The *Judgment of Paris* may indicate the use of the room as a courtroom or meeting hall.¹⁶⁹ The Challant male heirs presumably had jurisdiction to make decisions and hold court since they held the position of count in addition to other high positions for Aosta Valley and Savoy. The hall also contains a large amount of graffiti that feature aristocratic family names, which emphasize the restricted nature of the space. Wooden benches are located below the frescoes, similar to

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, 335. The names were given to the room by much later by scholars; it is unclear what was the exact purpose or name of this room.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

the benches in the courtyard under the marketplace fresco scenes. The benches that appear in the courtyard and the Baronial Hall suggest that these rooms functioned as social areas, and the themes of the frescoes and types of graffiti convey different purposes for the rooms.

The upper floors (the first and second floors) were restricted more so than the ground floor and reserved for the family and most affluent guests, such as kings and dukes, indicated by the titles of the rooms and the decorations, particularly heraldry. The first floor was designated for the lords and ladies of the estate and the most prominent guests. Leading up to the first floor is a main staircase, accessible via the front of the Baronial Hall on the ground floor. The placement of the spiral staircase (*scala a chiocciola*) by the most prestigious room on the ground floor indicates the upper floors to be more restricted and prestigious than the Baronial Hall. Directly across from the staircase is the oratory, or private room, of Marguerite de La Chambre (*Oratorio di Marguerite de La Chambre/Cabinet de la chamber de La Chambre*). The oratory also has a connected bedchamber (*Camera di Marguerite de La Chambre/Chambre de La Chambre*). Marguerite, the widow of Luigi d'Aymaville, appointed Giorgio di Challant as overseer of Issogne Castle, and resided in the castle during the late-fifteenth-century restoration, and so her private chamber has a prominent location. The largest room on the first floor is the "Room of the Armory/Chamber of Savoy" (*Sala d'armi – Chambre de Savoie*), and consists of a large stone fireplace that features the Savoy coat-of-arms, along with the family crests of Giorgio di

Challant's parents. This showcases the longevity of the restoration's results and Giorgio di Challant's legacy. The presence of the Savoy emblems also indicates the importance of the Challant's relationship with Savoy. Renato di Challant's Room (*Camera di Renato di Challant*), the Sacristy (utility room for the church, *Sacrestì/Chambre de la chapelle*), the Room of Countess Jolanda or "Chamber of the Wives" (*Camera della conessina Jolanda/Chambre des épouses*), the "Chamber for those closest to the Challants" (*Chambre pres de celle de Challant*), and the Chapel (*Cappella/Chapelle*) are also located on the first floor.

Issogne Castle's chapel is the most representational and social space on the first floor and contains a large amount of Biblical passages as graffiti. The chapel is divided into sections, similar to the kitchen on the ground floor. The sections separate the castle's inhabitants and servants, which was common in the chapels of private estates during the time period. In and around the chapel, frescoes depict religious scenes of the Nativity, apostles, and prophets, which indicate its liturgical function. Graffiti, the majority of which are inscribed in Latin, are prevalent in the chapel. A number of the inscriptions quote Biblical passages. The Biblical inscriptions can be analyzed to understand what passages were most fundamental to Issogne Castle's guests and inhabitants, and can also be used to discover the main concerns or issues of the time period.¹⁷⁰ Interestingly, the chapel is located near the service staircase, not the main spiral staircase. This may indicate that a general audience was allowed to use only the chapel and no

¹⁷⁰ For a list of the Biblical passages in Issogne Castle's chapel, see Borettaz, *I graffiti*, 64-68.

other room on this floor. The appearance of benches in the chapel also indicates the social, more “public” function of the space, similar to the benches of the courtyard.

The top floor or second floor (*secondo piano*), is the most intimate floor of the castle, as is frequently true of modern houses, as suggested by the function of the rooms on the floor and the highly educated, political graffiti that appear on the floor. The lack of benches, which would imply social gatherings, underscores the intimacy and privacy of this floor. The floor contains the majority of the bedchambers and includes the Room of the Scribe (*Camera dello scriba*), the Hall of the King of France (*Sala del re di Francia*), the Chamber, the Study, the Oratory of Giorgio di Challant (*Camera di Giorgio di Challant, Studiolo di Giorgio di Challant/Oratorio di Giorgio di Challant*), and the Room of the Countess (*Camera della contessina*). Several graffiti appear on the top floor and produce a conversation or debate on the Protestant Reformation, discussed later in the chapter. Overall, Issogne Castle represents an example of aristocratic space, as space that displays the Challant family’s affluence and creates class distinctions both through the floors and rooms.

The Challant Family

Throughout the inside of the castle, as well as on the outer walls and in the courtyard area, the family’s coat-of-arms appears in abundance to promote the Challant family. The prominent display of the family through heraldic devices is by no means unique to Issogne Castle. On the contrary, nobles and important

members of the bourgeoisie exhibited their arms on tapestries and frescoes that cover the walls of ceremonial rooms and chapels.¹⁷¹ A series of images appear on the courtyard walls to incite admiration and grandeur: Greek and Latin authors, figures of great leaders, the Challant family members' coat-of-arms with each coat bearing a scroll listing the main titles of the descendants of the family, a series of heraldic representations of the family's important marriage alliances, the fight between Hercules and Antaeus, and, finally, crests of the various Dukes of Savoy, who ruled over the Aosta Valley.¹⁷² Throughout the entire castle, various heraldic emblems denote the Challant family and their most important alliances. Coats-of-arms, or blazon, emerged in the middle of the twelfth century as identification for the upper classes in feudal society and were widespread through Europe by 1300.¹⁷³ The emblems were "signs of identity, marks of possession, and ornamental motifs all at the same time."¹⁷⁴ The Challant emblem consists of a shield with a top register of red and a bottom register of white, with a diagonal dark line through it. To indicate an alliance with another family, the two families' emblems were bisected vertically and combined together as one emblem, called marshaled arms. Heritage and family history were important to the Challant

¹⁷¹ Jacques Heers, *Family Clans in the Middle Ages: A study of political and social structures in urban areas*, trans. Barry Herbert, vol. 4 of *Europe in the Middle Ages: Selected Studies*, ed. Richard Vaughan (New York: North Holland, 1977), 102.

¹⁷² Boretta, *I graffiti*, 28.

¹⁷³ Pastoreau, *The Devil's Cloth*, 26.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

family and to society, as suggested by the prominent and frequent placement of the family's crests and heraldry.

The castle displayed and promoted the Challant family name to compete with the other branches of the family and to indicate the family as an influential *valdostano* (Aosta Valley) family. The Challant family had deep roots in the Aosta Valley. Bruno Orlandoni, in *Aosta Valley: Architecture, Art, Archaeology*, discusses two other Challant family castles from around the same time period.¹⁷⁵ The Fénis Castle, one of the most famous castles of the alpine area, is an early medieval castle that was reconstructed in the mid-fourteenth century to the early-fifteenth century by Aimone di Challant and his son. In 1390, Ibleto di Challant erected the Vèrres Castle on the site of an ancient building and the castle is considered to be one of the best examples of late-gothic architecture in Europe, although it is not as famous as the Fénis Castle. Giorgio di Challant's Issogne Castle reconstruction started shortly after the work on Vèrres Castle. Aosta Valley's Challant castles highlight the prominence of the Challant family in the valley.

Giorgio di Challant

Through his position as overseer and influence in the late-fourteenth century reconstruction and design, Giorgio di Challant is a significant figure for Issogne Castle. He was born in 1440 and became a canon at a very young age in

¹⁷⁵ Bruno Orlandoni, *Aosta Valley: Architecture, Art, Archaeology* (Aosta: Industrie Grafiche Editoriali Musumeci, 1990), 12-14.

Lyon. After attending the university at Avignon, he moved to Aosta Valley to attend the university at Turin and travelled frequently, which resulted in his 1465 appointment as *protonotaio apostolico* by Pope Paul II.¹⁷⁶ In 1468, Giorgio di Challant became the prior of the seminary of Saint Orso, a prominent position in a respected religious institution of Aosta, and in 1479 he was appointed the archdeacon of the cathedral at Aosta. Giorgio di Challant was responsible for reconstruction of the Collegiate Church of Saint Orso and he personally financed the construction of the Priory of Saint Orso, which he began promptly after his appointment as prior.¹⁷⁷ Giorgio di Challant developed a unique program for the pre-existing Issogne Castle, which took traditional customs, such as the display of coat-of-arms and influences from emerging styles of Italy and northern Europe, and produced a fresco cycle in the courtyard unlike any other wall paintings from the period. The castle promoted the Challant family name. Through these accomplishments, Giorgio di Challant proved himself as a patron of art and promoter of the Challant family name. The castle became a place for expression in the form of graffiti. Although graffiti-making most likely was highly prevalent in late medieval and early modern society, Issogne Castle's graffiti has withstood the test of time to shed light on the time period and continue the Challant family legacy.

¹⁷⁶ Roettgen, *Italian Frescoes*, 333.

¹⁷⁷ Orlandoni, *Aosta Valley*, 14.

A blend of styles and periods develop today's Issogne Castle. The castle was mostly deserted by 1696 until the nineteenth century, but by then the furniture and decorative objects had been removed.¹⁷⁸ In 1872, after years of abandonment, Issogne Castle was auctioned off and bought by a Turin artist, Victor Avondo, who was dedicated to restoring the castle to its original grandeur. Avondo re-populated the castle with furniture from original periods and styles, along with nineteenth-century reproductions. Avondo donated the castle to the Italian State in 1907 and in 1948 it became the property of Aosta Valley.¹⁷⁹ Today the public can view the castle through guided tours. Giorgio di Challant's design still remains. Through Giorgio di Challant's appointment as overseer and subsequent work on the castle, Issogne Castle became the centerpiece of the Challant family and a representation of the family's prestige.

Issogne Castle After Giorgio di Challant

Canon Giorgio di Challant died in 1509 and shortly afterward Issogne Castle reached the height of its wealth and power under the ownership of Renato di Challant, who dedicated his life to ensuring that the Challant family lived on after his death. Renato di Challant was the eldest son of Filiberto (Countess Marguerite's son). Filiberto di Challant died in 1517, and his wife, Renato's mother (Louise d'Aarberg), died a year later, leaving the fifteen-year-old Renato as count of Challant. Renato di Challant served in illustrious positions, which

¹⁷⁸ Roettgen, *Italian Frescoes*, 333.

¹⁷⁹ Borettaz, "*Anche i muri*," 156.

included marshal of Savoy, knight of the Annunciation, adviser to Duke Charles II and Governor Emanuele Filiberto, lieutenant of Savoy and Piedmont, governor of Aosta Valley, Savoy, and Bresse, and member of the State Council, in addition to his service as count of Challant.¹⁸⁰ Despite his four marriages, Renato only produced two children who lived beyond infancy, daughters Filiberta and Isabella, both from one marriage. In 1555, Renato di Challant matched Isabella with Giovanni Federico Madruzzo and designated him as Issogne Castle's heir, after Filiberta, who was originally intended to marry Madruzzo, ran off with a lover. Filiberta's love story is documented in the castle's graffiti and is discussed by Giacosa and Ferrero.¹⁸¹ After Renato di Challant's death in 1565, Issogne Castle and the sixth title of Earl was passed on to Isabella's new husband.¹⁸² Her new husband hailed from Trent's prominent Madruzzo family, which included Giovanni Federico's uncle, Cardinal Cristoforo Madruzzo.¹⁸³ Members of the Madruzzo family in Trent held titles of cardinal and bishop, and played a role in the Council of Trent (1545-1563). Cardinal Cristoforo Madruzzo was present at the crucial late 1545 Council of Trent session. He held a great feast at his palace at the beginning of 1546, where Catholic and Protestant bishops, the Archbishop,

¹⁸⁰ Henry, *Histoire Populaire*, 342.

¹⁸¹ Giacosa, *I castelli valdostani* (Turin: L.F. Cogliati, 1905), 245; Ferrero, *The Valley of Aosta; a descriptive and historical sketch of an Alpine valley noteworthy in story and in monument* (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1910), 249.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Roettgen, *Italian Frescoes*, 333.

and the procurator fiscal of the Council were in attendance.¹⁸⁴ Thus, when Madruzzo married Isabella and became the heir, Issogne Castle and the Challant family gained a strong Catholic alliance, which strengthened their ties to the papacy, Savoy, Spain, and France. Renato realized the need for such a strong family alliance and made sure it was in place before his death to assure the survival of the Challant family, which was particularly important without a male heir. In the graffiti, numerous coat-of-arms confirm the presence of various families, and include references to Challant, Madruzzo, and Savoy. Upon Renato's decision to create the alliance with the Madruzzo family other members of the Challant family questioned the legitimacy of Madruzzo's claim to the position of count and ownership of Issogne Castle.¹⁸⁵

For at least one hundred years after Isabella and Giovanni Federico Madruzzo's marriage, the castle was a destination for prominent individuals from Trent and the Madruzzo family affiliates, a fact underscored by the large amounts of graffiti that refer to the Madruzzo name. A great deal of information can be learned from the castle's graffiti about the Challant family and their ties to other families, cities, towns, and nations. Although the focus of this chapter lies in socio-economical matters highlighted by the graffiti, the Challant family's trials and tribulations are documented on the walls alongside conversations and

¹⁸⁴ Gerard Kelly, "Eucharistic Sacrifice in the Council of Trent," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 51:268 (1985): 269; Gary Macy, "Dancin' the Council Away," *National Catholic Reporter* 37:25 (2001): 13.

¹⁸⁵ Henry, *Histoire Populaire*, 343-44.

historical evidence. Graffiti allow the walls to “talk” and reveal secrets, stories, and other facts buried by time.

The Power of Names

Records of visits to the castle, which frequently include names and locations written in a multitude of languages, predominantly French, comprise large quantities of the graffiti found in Issogne Castle. Inscriptions with names showcase prominent family members from a range of regions and identities who frequented the castle.¹⁸⁶ Inscriptions are predominantly written or inscribed in French and Italian. Through political associations and recorded visits, it is certain that the heads of Issogne Castle from the sixteenth century, first Giorgio, followed by Filiberto, Renato, and Madruzzo, hosted an array of significant members of the nobility from a variety of places, though mainly from France and French-speaking areas. French was also the most commonly used language in the castle, used by the Challant family and by many of the guests. The guests often came from the areas of western France, where the family possessed various lands and titles.¹⁸⁷

Prominent family clans, public officials, and nations receive a level of elite respect in the castle’s graffiti. The names and locations found in inscriptions are predominantly those of aristocratic families; it seems that the ritual of inscribing a name at Issogne Castle was reserved for the members of the nobility.

¹⁸⁶ Heers, *Family Clans*, 8-56, esp. 8, 17, 56.

¹⁸⁷ Borettaz, *I graffiti*, 46.

The ritual denotes power through an assertion of symbolic “ownership” of a location by the association of the name with that location. Furthermore, the signing of a family name indicates that name to possess a certain amount of notoriety. Family names are linked to the places from which a family’s power derives, places where land, money, and titles are held. Frequently, Issogne Castle’s graffiti contain names – *Pierre / de Vuille / demeurant / a Issogne; Richarand; Varax 1538 3 augusti; Sebastian Reinhartt / von Franchfurt / 1593* – as well as locations and sometimes a “V V,” which looks like a “W”: *VV Melchoir / Balbis di Ceva / 1592; VV Gaspar Balbis / di Ceva [design] / [coat-of-arms]; VV Bringes / 1586; Barbero / 1554; C. Didier / VV Seclin / 1573; VV Challant / Bringeust*.¹⁸⁸ Borettaz, who has recorded these inscriptions, frequently adds a note to the inscription that explains the identity of the family. For example, Borettaz notes whether the family was a *valdostano* noble family or a member of Swiss or German nobility. An inscription that reads: *Loys Guydonis*, has a note by Borettaz that explains this graffito refers to the last member of the Guidonis, a noble Aosta family.¹⁸⁹ Thus, it becomes evident that an informal, systemized way for a guest to leave a record of their visit existed, with a few variations. This signature process supports the theory that graffiti-making is a performed, ritual act, repeated over a long period of time. Many of these examples indicate loyalty or affiliation with a ruling family, or to a specific location, through the use of

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, 66-95.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid, 79.

Latin “*VV*.” This “*VV*” is an abbreviation of the Latin verb “*vivat*,” which means “long live...” (or the Italian *viva*) and refers to whoever is named in the inscription.¹⁹⁰ Nations also receive this epithet: *VV France* and *VV Savoy* appear on the second floor *loggiato* (“open gallery”). Historically, the bourgeoisie have frequently sought to imitate customs of the nobility, and this imitation is illustrated in the following graffito found at Issogne Castle situated on the top floor, on the fourth pillar of the *loggiato*: *Abraham Cuche de / Dombresson, bourgeois / de Vallengin 1583*, “Abraham Cuche of/from Dombresson, bourgeois/merchant of/from Vallengin.”¹⁹¹ It is uncertain, though, whether his last name is “Cuche” or “Cuche de Dombresson,” though it is likely the former, since the latter would imply that he is noble yet he states that he is “bourgeois.”¹⁹² The act of signing one’s name can be seen as an expression of power or authority, and signing one’s name beside another name or location (town, city, nation, king, or prominent family such as Challant or Madruzzo) forms a personal association or develops a sense of loyalty.¹⁹³ A graffito signature also adds the name into the

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, 53.

¹⁹¹ I would like to thank Markus Cruse for this translation and information.

¹⁹² For more information on Valengin and its relationship to Renato Challant, with the conversion to Protestantism in 1536, a decision Renato Challant was unhappy about but powerless even though he was Count of Valengin at the time, please see Jeffrey R. Watt, “The Reception of the Reformation in Valengin, Switzerland, 1547-1588,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 20:1 (1989): 89-93.

¹⁹³ Ruth Ahnert, “Writing in the Tower of London during the Reformation, ca. 1530-1558,” *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 72:2 (2009): 177-78.

corpus of names already present, which produces a “guest book” on the walls of the castle.

Aosta Valley is frequently described as isolated, but due to the prominent positions held by Giorgio di Challant, Renato di Challant, and Giovanni Federico Madruzzo, Issogne Castle attracted many visitors from all over Europe. Aosta Valley is located between Piedmont and Savoy in a remote valley, separated from Italy and the state of Savoy by the high mountains that border it on all sides. Issogne Castle hosted a variety of geographically diverse members of the nobility, despite its isolated position evidenced by the vast array of names with links to specific locations in which appear in the graffiti. Giorgio's, Renato's, and Madruzzo's connections and positions were primarily responsible for this variety of guests. Numerous names in the graffiti are those of the Aosta nobility. In addition to the nobility from *valdostana* and the majority of inscriptions from French graffitiists, many guests visited from other European nations as well. Quite a few inscriptions are in German, particularly ones that bear the family name and coat-of-arms of *Wolchenstein* with various spellings and dates. Numerous Spanish inscriptions also appear throughout the castle. In 1528, Renato di Challant married his second wife, Countess Mencia Braganza, who was the daughter of the Duke of Braganza and the mother of Renato's two daughters. Through this marriage, the Challant family gained a strong connection to the Spanish Court of Charles V. This alliance invited members of the Spanish nobility to Issogne Castle. However, before Renato's marriage, an early

inscription appears in Spanish: *1511/ No pudo mas fortuna / Escobar*. This inscription suggests that at least one Spanish-speaking guest stayed at the castle in the early sixteenth century. The castle hosted guests from a variety of places in Europe, as indicated by the graffiti.

Reformation Graffiti

Graffiti of mottos, phrases, and biblical passages connect the castle and its sixteenth-century inhabitants to the Protestant Reformation. On the top floors of Issogne Castle, Latin inscriptions left by those who frequented the castle reveal different political and religious ideas and debates. By the end of the fifteenth century, widespread Humanist criticism of the Catholic Church surfaced and, frequently, modern scholars consider this as foreshadowing the Protestant Reformation.¹⁹⁴ In the first decades of the sixteenth century, the Protestant Reformation took hold of Europe. In 1521, the Catholic Church excommunicated Martin Luther for heresy, which began a period of time where theological differences between Catholics and the budding Protestant sects intensified and boiled over. The people, cities, and nations of Europe throughout the sixteenth century, particularly in the first half of the century, were not necessarily strictly on one side or other. Politics played a key role in religious affiliations and individuals, cities, and nations vacillated depending upon political alliance. Due to the cruel treatment of Protestants and the influence of volatile politics, allegiances to Protestantism and Catholicism were often insecure. Italy, however,

¹⁹⁴ Hans J. Hillerbrand, *Historical Dictionary of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation* (Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, 2000), xix.

and presumably the Challant family (at least publically through Renato di Challant), maintained strong ties to Catholicism, most likely motivated by political reasons rather than religious ones. Issogne Castle became a center for multiple political and civic debates, as it was located in the Aosta Valley, situated in the uppermost northwest corner of Italy, near France, Switzerland, and Savoy territories. This proximity, along with guests who included Germans, Spanish, and Portuguese, allowed for Issogne Castle's unique position for debate and conversation over Protestant and Catholic ideas and is reflected in the graffiti.

The elite statuses of the graffitists are evidenced by their inscriptions' location on the restricted, top floor and the use of Latin. Education was a key facet of the aristocracy, but it was becoming a privilege extended to the lower classes.¹⁹⁵ After 1300, an education in reading, writing, and arithmetic became increasingly vital for people of all classes, and by the sixteenth century a certain level of education was required for many jobs. However, knowledge of Latin remained elite and signified the high economic status of the upper classes: "those who fought" and "those who prayed." Latin was taught in preparation for university and ecclesiastic positions.¹⁹⁶ A portion of the Latin inscriptions on Issogne Castle illuminate the schism caused by the emergence of Protestantism.

¹⁹⁵ Merry E. Weisner-Hanks, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, 3rd ed., *New Approaches to European History*, ed. William Beik, et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 142.

¹⁹⁶ Herlihy, *Women*, 15.

Three inscriptions particularly relevant to the schism are dated from the mid- to late-sixteenth century and produce a conversation about the Protestant Reformation. The first inscription reads, *Le 28 d'octobre 1535/ la messe a reste de dire/ a Geneve*; “On 28 October 1535 the Mass is forbidden / in Geneva,” and is written on the second floor of the service staircase (Fig. 19). The graffito alludes to the 1535 town council reforms, which included an officially mandated end to the Mass in Geneva.¹⁹⁷ The second inscription reads: *Adi 26 settembre 1565/ post tenebras spero lucem/ I. Lando*, “September 26, 1565/ After the darkness I hope for light/ I. Lando,” and is inscribed with a metal point, flanked by the decorative knot of Savoy (Fig. 20). This graffito refers to the pre-1535 Geneva motto and is located in the second-floor oratory (*Oratorio di Giorgio di Challant*). The third inscription begins with: *post tenebras lux almae redit...*; “After darkness [nourishing] light returns...” and is found in the “Green Room” with a date of 1576.¹⁹⁸ This line uses the Latin word “*lux*,” as opposed to the last graffito, which uses the accusative version of the Latin term for light, “*lucem*.” These two inscriptions allude to the Geneva motto, which was altered in 1535 from *post tenebras spero lucem*; “After the darkness I hope for light,” to *post*

¹⁹⁷ Boretta, *I graffiti*, 80. “*Scala di servizio*,” or “the service staircase,” where many inscriptions are found. Unlike the “gossip is evil” graffito, these inscriptions appear in the stairwell; “gossip is evil” is on the doorway, the threshold that leads to the staircase. I do not believe that the inscriptions found in the service staircase are intended for lower class readers like those on the entrance to the staircase. I wish to thank Dr. Markus Cruse for the translation.

¹⁹⁸ Boretta, “*Anche i muri*,” 154. He calls the “Green room” by several names throughout his work: *corrodio verde*, *Camera verde*, and *Cabinet de la liberairie*. I wish to thank Caitlin Deegan for her help with this translation.

tenebras lux, “After darkness, light,” from Job 17:12, to show Geneva’s official conversion to Protestantism.¹⁹⁹ The references to Geneva’s religious conversion would be evident to individuals from the time period and would have encouraged conversations about the Protestant Reformation.

As the first inscription states, Geneva officially forbid the Mass in 1535, and was a significant year for Geneva. The language of the graffito line emphasizes the importance of this historical moment in Genevan and Calvinist history. The city council removed images from churches starting in 1533 and, in 1535, forbid Mass and assumed control of the minting of coins from the bishop. The council then began to mark the coins with the revised motto *post tenebras lux*.²⁰⁰ The reforms were aided in gaining military protection from the neighboring Protestant city Berne against the Duke of Savoy, from whom Geneva wanted to gain independence.²⁰¹ The use of the phrase “*post tenebras lux*” conveys the opinion held by Geneva, Calvinists, and the different sects of the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century. *Post tenebras lux* refers to the Protestant phrase “*sola fide*” (“by faith alone”), which alludes to the doctrine of “justification by faith alone,” one of the basic principles of the Protestant

¹⁹⁹ Herman J. Selderhuis, *John Calvin: A Pilgrim's Life* (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 54.

²⁰⁰ Selderhuis, *John Calvin*, 54.

²⁰¹ Ulinka Rublack, *Reformation Europe*, edition of *New Approaches to European History*, ed. William Beik and T.C.W. Blanning (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 115.

movement.²⁰² In the following year, 1536, Calvin arrived in Geneva to help fight for the city's autonomy and to spread Calvinism.²⁰³ Geneva's reforms during the 1530s were politically driven, due to the city's tenuous position between France, Switzerland, and Savoy.

The Mass is the heart of Catholicism, the paramount spiritual ritual, and in the inscription it becomes symbolic of the schism. Borettaz states that a visitor from nearby Switzerland who witnessed this radicalization inscribed the phrase with sanguine, which emphasizes the graffitist's passion, as examined with the "gossip is evil" graffito, where sanguine is also used to highlight the message.²⁰⁴ A 1535 graffito highlights that the year and the Protestant Reformation's influence on the sixteenth century Europe. The newly autonomous Geneva made Protestant reforms in 1535, to strengthen their allegiance with Berne, and on May 21, 1536, Geneva's citizens voted in the "new light," Calvinism.²⁰⁵ Catholicism became associated with domination, Savoy, and France, and Geneva's official transition from Catholicism to Calvinism (Protestantism). After Geneva's

²⁰² Andrew Pettegree, ed., *The Reformation World* (London: Routledge, 2000), 277.

²⁰³ Rublack, *Reformation Europe*, 115.

²⁰⁴ Borettaz, *I graffiti*, 50, 80.

²⁰⁵ Selderhuis, *John Calvin*, 54.

sovereignty, the “light” of *lux*, Protestantism, symbolized patriotism and independence.²⁰⁶

The second graffito, dated to 1565, does not support Geneva’s reformation movement and indicates a personal attachment to Savoy and to Catholicism. Geneva was the only lasting Calvinist republic during the sixteenth century, after years of tribulations.²⁰⁷ The graffito uses the old Geneva motto that ends with “*spero lucem*” and includes the Savoy knot. Savoy was a firm supporter of Catholicism and the older Genevan motto indicates a “hope for light” to come. The inscription and motto, which is a biblical quote, is in the first person. By copying a specific city’s motto, and also is a Biblical verse, along with a name, “*I. Lando*,” the graffito becomes an assertion of the graffitist’s faith. The phrase gains an association with the name and emblem, the Savoy knot, and infers that the meaning behind the phrase has specific, personal relevance to the graffitist.²⁰⁸ Together with the Savoy knot design, the graffito may indicate the graffitist’s “hope for light,” with Savoy once more in control of Geneva and a return to Catholicism. After 1555, the families who did not support Calvinism had left Geneva, and this fact could be a reference to I. Lando’s (the name inscribed on

²⁰⁶ Pettegree, *The Reformation World*, 310.

²⁰⁷ Rublack, *Reformation Europe*, 119.

²⁰⁸ Ahnert, “Writing in the Tower of London,” 177.

the graffito) loyalty to Savoy.²⁰⁹ Although the graffito does not seem to support Geneva's official conversion to Protestantism, the reference to the Genevan motto allows the inscription to be linked to a debate or discussion about the Protestant Reformation, and specifically to the conversation regarding Geneva's altered motto.

The final graffito, dated to 1576, was inscribed with a metal point (as opposed to the use of sanguine) four years after 1572, a significant date because of the St. Bartholomew Day Massacre, the culmination of the Protestant struggle in France. The Massacre occurred in Paris when prominent Huguenots (the French Calvinists) had gathered for the highly publicized wedding of Henry of Navarre to Marguerite of Valois. Marguerite was the youngest daughter of Catherine de Medici, the mother of the King of France, Charles IX. Catherine served as regent for the young Charles and she initiated the massacre by allowing the Guises to act out their revenge.²¹⁰ Thousands of Huguenots were slaughtered at the wedding, which began early on August 23, St. Bartholomew's Day, as well as throughout Paris, and all over France.²¹¹ The massacre is also referred to in a Counter-Reformation graffito, discussed shortly.

²⁰⁹ Rublack, *Reformation*, 119.

²¹⁰ Hillerbrand, *Historical*, 190-91.

²¹¹ J.H. Elliott, *Europe Divided: 1559-1598 Second Edition*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 144-49.

Central and northern Italy had citizens from an array of social classes interested in Protestant ideas, however, no part of Italy officially embraced Protestantism, due to the Italy's strict laws against reformation. As noted by Andrew Pettegree in *The Reformation World*, Inquisition records from 1542-55 show that there were around forty groups in northern and central Italy who worked openly for the propagation of Protestantism.²¹² These groups included humanist scholars (the *accademia*) of the Italian nobility, Venetian merchants, and Sienese peasants angered by famine. Ulinka Rublack, who also discusses Italy's relationship with Protestantism, adds Italian noblewomen to the list of Italian's who embraced Protestant views.²¹³ However, no Italian town or city-state officially endorsed the reform. In 1522 and 1523, Protestant preachers reached the towns of the Aosta Valley, described by Henry in *Histoire populaire religieuse et civile de la vallée d'Aoste*.²¹⁴ To counter these "heretic" preachers, the Bishop of Aosta, Monsignor Berruti, worked to suppress Protestantism by forbidding Lutheran books and hearing the Lutheran preachers, under penalty of excommunication and a fine. After Bishop Berruti's death in 1525, by 1529, Pierre Gazin was elected bishop and enacted a program of "education of the true faith" in all of the parish churches of Aosta. Thus, the people of the Aosta Valley

²¹² Pettegree, *The Reformation*, 290-93.

²¹³ Rublack, *Reformation*, 119.

²¹⁴ Henry, *Histoire Populaire*, 315-56.

stayed faithful to Catholicism. Instead of beginning decades of reform, Aosta Valley stopped the reformation early and prevented reforms from taking hold in the valley.

Counter-Reformation Graffiti

Italy officially remained Catholic throughout the sixteenth century and a period of “Counter-Reformation,” or “Catholic Reform,” swept through Europe in the second-half of the century.²¹⁵ Graffiti found on the top floor of Issogne Castle reference Catholicism and this reference can be seen to debate the Protestant graffiti. Historically, the government of Aosta Valley had officially favored Catholicism. Two inscriptions stand out as specific references to Catholicism: *15y67 7 ottobre / In te Domine speravi*, “October 7, 1567 / In thee, O Lord, I have hoped,” found in the green corridor or Green Room; and the second graffito, *In te Domine speravi non con/fundar in aeternum / 1572*, “O Lord, in thee have I trusted: let me never be confounded,” written in the second floor gallery north on the third pillar.²¹⁶ These two inscriptions quote the Ps. 70:1 and begin the “*Te Deum*,” a Catholic hymn.

The first inscription is dated two years after the *post tenebras lux* inscription with the Savoy knot, and both inscriptions were written soon after Calvin’s death, which was a tumultuous moment in Europe’s history. The second

²¹⁵ Hillerbrand, *Historical Dictionary*, 49-50.

²¹⁶ Borettaz, *I graffiti*, 98.

graffito is dated 1572, the year of the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre. In *Europe Divided: 1559-1598*, J.H. Elliott discusses the possible collaborators behind the massacre.²¹⁷ In celebration of this massacre, Pope Gregory XIII ordered the *Te Deum* to be recited. This order led the Huguenots, and over the years modern scholars, to believe that Rome had worked together with the royal families of France and Spain to plan this massacre. The Cardinal of Lorraine, a close advisor to Catherine de Medici, wove a "story of premeditation" in Rome, because he wished to strengthen the tie between Catherine and the Catholic cause. Regardless of whether or not the massacre had been orchestrated by these powerful forces, the ordered recitation of the *Te Deum* illustrates the Pope's satisfaction with the deaths of prominent Huguenots and the blow to the Protestant movement.

Conclusion

Giorgio di Challant molded Issogne Castle into an aristocratic space that features a unique and enlightening discussion of class and contemporary medieval and early modern social issues. The performative act of graffiti on the walls and frescoes make the castle alive with sentiments, history, and social commentary. Location, documentation of artists and dates, and the courtyard frescoes' rich display of socio-economical issues, begin to show that the castle's graffiti form a viable source for history and should be analyzed. The courtyard graffiti become evident as traces of how the inhabitants of the castle viewed the lower classes, in

²¹⁷ J.H. Elliott, *Europe Divided: 1559-1598*, 2nd ed., (London: Collins, 1968), 220.

part by similar “attacks,” or scratches, as found on the Arena Chapel frescoes, on the *pestapepe* and “prostitute” figures. The service staircase “gossip is evil” message to the lower classes, religiously charged graffiti from the sixteenth century, and the overall presence of a repeated, ritualized, informal system of names, continue to illuminate the importance of the Issogne Castle graffiti. The early modern graffiti leave future generations a glimpse into the world of the time period in a manner that has not yet been given proper attention by scholars.

Chapter 4

CONCLUSION

In this thesis I have shown that graffiti present social conversations over time between groups of people, which gives graffiti ritual, performative qualities. As illustrated by the Arena Chapel and Issogne Castle, graffiti-making is a powerful and dynamic force. Graffiti can alter the way a fresco is interpreted, as highlighted by the “prostitute” of the guardhouse scene at Issogne Castle, where a figure most likely misinterpreted as female has a graffito stating, “*meretricis*.” Due to this graffito, the figure has since been referred to as a prostitute. This thesis discusses cultural issues produced by the conversations of graffiti. I argue that these markings denote ritual and performative acts of human presence. Graffiti at the Arena Chapel and Issogne Castle engage in a conversation with the frescoes, architecture, and the functions of the space. They are documentations of conversations stimulated by late medieval and early modern audiences through performing acts of graffiti.

Scholars of the Arena Chapel frescoes have studied the intricate iconography and references to complex theology and science, but by adding the graffiti into the analysis, the reception of contemporary viewers’ is indicated. Giotto’s visual narrative in the frescoes represents the past (the Life cycles), present (the Vices and the Virtues), and ends with the future (the *Last Judgment*), and these were readily understood by late medieval audiences. The graffiti the viewers left serve as performative responses, on a social level, to the chapel’s

fresco program. The Vices guide the eye to Hell, and represent what medieval sermons advocated their congregations avoid in order to escape damnation. The terrifying imagery of tortures in Hell reflects the punishments inflicted on criminals at that time. Thus, I have argued that the scratch-mark graffiti indicate a response to the sinful behavior, since Christianity's belief in damnation to Hell was an integral part of medieval life. The graffiti placed on the imagery of evil in the chapel also indicate the ways in which sight was understood at the time. The traditional optical theory of extramission held that sight was a powerful force: that it could literally "touch" through the gaze. It is signified in the scratch marks attempting to "gouge out" the evil figures' eyes, to "blind" them, so they symbolically could not see and therefore "touch" or harm the audience. A complex intellectual communication of the concept of *circumspicit*, "all-awareness," explained by Francesco da Barberino in *Documenta amoris*, can also be seen as a theme related to sight, through the lesser-known Circumspection figure on the chapel's north door fused with the "new" optical theory (intromission) that entered academic discourses in Europe.

At Issogne Castle the frescoes and walls serve as a guest book and, more importantly, a way for visitors to leave physical marks denoting their responses to the frescoes and key social issues of the late medieval and early modern periods. The marketplace frescoes in the castle's courtyard permitted guests and occupants alike to comment on the lower classes. These graffiti document their responses and allow scholars today a glimpse into how the castle's guests perceived the

lower classes. Through the graffiti, lower-class women (described as “spinners” and prostitutes) and the destitute were the recipients of the most insults. They garner a majority of the more emotional responses, including non-textual markings (“scratch marks”), such as those found in the Arena Chapel. These graffiti are highly suggestive of class distinctions present in the castle and society of the period. The service staircase, used for the domestic workers to move food and other goods back and forth, primarily from the ground floor up to the higher, more restricted levels of the estate, contains a fascinating inscription. Given this inscription’s placement and use of a vernacular language, which warns of the dangers of gossip is presumably directed at the lower-class workers of the castle. The graffiti found on the top, most restricted floor also indicate a debate over political and religious issues by the privileged guests who frequented the castle through a discussion of the Protestant Reformation. Calvinist mottos and Catholic hymns are explicit references to conversation in the graffiti about the Protestant Reformation that individuals from the time period would clearly have been able to discern. In addition to the social commentary provided by graffiti, graffiti can also be seen to act as a “guest book” at Issogne Castle. The numerous examples of inscribed names, which are often accompanied by a date and geographical area, appear in an informal, systemized manner. Thus, it becomes evident that a ritualized process developed for guests to record their visits. This systemization reaffirms the theory that the graffiti are performed, ritual acts.

Graffiti encourage more graffiti, and these acts form a ritual or performance, which allow members of a society to engage and converse with each other, and leave physical responses to frescoes, locations, spaces, and social issues of their time for future generations. Graffiti allow for a glimpse into the world of late medieval and early modern Italy in a unique, engaging manner that has not been given sufficient attention by scholars, until the twenty-first century. Through this discussion of graffiti, a shortcoming in the academic assessment of graffiti has been partially rectified.

Graffiti from the medieval and early modern periods appear on other kinds of spaces, such as prisons, cities, and book margins, in addition to religious and domestic settings. The London Tower is a famous example of prison graffiti that has interested scholars since the nineteenth century.²¹⁸ The recognition of the presence of the graffiti has caused an influx of interest in the tower. Florence, Italy also has evidence of medieval and early modern graffiti.²¹⁹ Although the walls have been altered over the years, the portions of the original wall where the inscriptions existed now function as plaques, since they have been cut, preserved, and mounted onto the newer walls. For example, flood marks dated to November 4, 1333 and November 4, 1966 appear on the newer walls. On the *Palazzo*

²¹⁸ Ruth Ahnert, "Writing in the Tower of London during the Reformation, ca. 1530-1558," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 72:2 (2009): 168-92. See Ahnert's notes for additional sources that discuss graffiti in the Tower of London.

²¹⁹ Laura Mongillo, "Florence: A (free) medieval graffiti walking tour," *Eurocheapo*, accessed April 8, 2010, <http://www.eurocheapo.com/blog/florence-a-free-medieval-graffiti-walking-tour.html>.

Vecchio, in the *Piazza della Signoria*, there is a profile image of a man's face incised on the front wall. The face is the focus of a number of legends, several of which ascribe the production of the face to Michelangelo as well as attribute the face to be a portrait of Girolamo Savonarola, who was burned him at the stake in the piazza outside of the *Palazzo Vecchio*. Book margins are another space in which medieval and early modern graffiti occurred. Book margins emerge as a space for individuals to express various sentiments and "[raise] questions about how books were used in the early modern period."²²⁰ Although graffiti was seemingly ubiquitous and accepted in the medieval and early modern periods, I focus on examples that appear on frescoes, since this type of graffiti is often ignored or removed either physically or electronically (through Photoshop or similar processes). Graffiti that appropriate frescoes allow for fresh interpretations of the original audiences' readings. Graffiti appear in many different places during the medieval and early modern periods.

Issues of class have been examined in this paper through an analysis of the graffiti and their placement in the Arena Chapel and Issogne Castle, but class is not the only issue that can be explored when studying medieval and early modern graffiti. I touch on issues of gender, but the topic could be expanded into a more fruitful study, which could, in turn, add to the scholarly discourse on gender in the medieval and early modern periods. Belief in the Evil Eye, which is explored as a possible aspect of the ritualistic graffiti-making behavior in the Arena Chapel,

²²⁰ Jason Scott-Warren, "Reading Graffiti in the Early Modern Book," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 73:3 (2010): 363-81. Also see Ahnert, "Writing in the Tower of London," 178-89.

connects to witchcraft and, thus, to gender. Another possible gender issue I touched upon in chapter two, in regard to gossip, could prove to be a productive discussion that would link ritual, gossip, and gender to graffiti. The Arena Chapel and Issogne Castle graffiti could be endlessly explored through a variety of lenses.

I would also hope this thesis invites reflections on the way in which graffiti and similar acts of ritual are relevant to contemporary society. The new interest in medieval graffiti has been stimulated by new modes of conversation, such as the Internet. Today in a culture ruled by technology, we understand that conversation does not have to be face to face. Thus, contemporary society has significantly expanded the definition of “conversation.” Email, blogs, Facebook, text messages – these are all modes of communication in which a message is sent and the readers/responders can see it whenever it is convenient for them. Conversation does not need to occur in real time. Internet communication allows conversation to be viewed by the public, such as posting on Twitter or responding to a heated conversation on a blog, and often precipitates responses from strangers.

The Internet is a key innovation that has contributed to the renewed interest in medieval graffiti through a broader understanding of conversation. The Facebook “wall” is a feature that appears on every member’s profile page. Aptly named, the “wall” (although it is transitioning to “timeline”) is a conceptual and metaphorical link to “writing on the wall,” or earlier forms of graffiti.

Conversations appear on this electronic wall, typically from one individual to another, but with the option that others can look at anyone else's wall and comment. Others that view the communication can choose to join the conversation, either through "liking" (the "like" button) or commenting (the "comment" button), or by creating one's own "post" or comment. A new phenomenon, which further indicates how graffiti form a type of conversation applicable to contemporary technology, is that of graffiti being posted onto the Internet. The street artist Banksy, who is known worldwide but remains anonymous ("Banksy" is a pseudonym), "tags" in different cities. His pieces are loaded with social commentary, frequently about injustice. Since the artist is unknown and infamous for globetrotting, people identify his work, take pictures of it, and post it on the Internet. Conversations on the Internet emerge, which discuss the social context of the latest added piece, and the Banksy graffiti image becomes widely transmitted. The modes of conversation developed from recent advances in technology may help explain the renewed interest in medieval graffiti. Such methods of conversation allow medieval graffiti to be more meaningful for contemporary society.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ahnert, Ruth. "Writing in the Tower of London during the Reformation, ca. 1530-1558." *Huntington Library Quarterly* 72:2 (2009): 168-192.
- Akbari, Suzanne Conklin. *Seeing through the Veil: Optical Theory and Medieval Allegory*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004.
- Arensberg, Conrad M. "Culture as Behavior: Structure and Emergence." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 1 (1972): 1-26.
- Ashley, Kathleen and Véronique Plesch. "The Cultural Processes of 'Appropriation.'" *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 32:1 (2002): 1-15.
- Barberi, Sandra. *Il Castello di Issogne in Valle D'Aosta: diciotto secoli di storia e quarant'anni di storicismo*. Turin: Umberto Allemandi & C., 1999.
- Basile, Giuseppe. *Giotto: The Arena Chapel Frescoes*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1992.
- Bellinati, Claudio. *Il veneto e i giubilei: Contributo alla storia culturale e spirituale dell'evento in terra veneta, 1300-2000*. Padua: Il Poligrafo, 1999.
- _____. *La Cappella di Giotto all'Arena (1300-1306)*. Padua [n.p.], 1967.
- _____. *Nuovi studi sulla cappella di Giotto all'Arena di Padova: 25 marzo 1303-2003*. Padua: Il Poligrafo, 2003.
- Biernoff, Suzannah. *Sight and Embodiment in the Middle Ages*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.

Biggam, Carole Patricia, Christian Kay, and Nicola Pitchford. *Progress in Colour Studies: Language and Culture*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2006.

Bolzoni, Lina. *The Web of Images: Vernacular Preaching from its Origins to St Bernardino da Siena*. England: Ashgate Publishing, 2004.

Bongiorno, Laurine Mack. "The Theme of the Old and the New Law in the Arena Chapel." *The Art Bulletin* 50:1 (1968): 11-20.

Borettaz, Omar. "Anche i muri parlano. I graffiti del castello." In *Il Castello di Issogne in Valle d'Aosta: diciotto secoli di storia e quarant'anni di storicismo*, edited by Sandra Barberi, 153-156. Turin: Umberto Allemandi & C., 1999.

_____. *I graffiti nel castello di Issogne in Valle d'Aosta*. Turin: Priuli & Verlucca, 1995.

Bourbon, Stephen of. *Anecdotes historiques, légendes et apologues, tirés du recueil inédit d'Etienne de Bourbon dominicain du 13e siècle*. Edited by A. Lecoy de la Marche. Paris: Renouard, 1877.

Brennan, Teresa and Martin Jay, ed. *Vision in Context: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Sight*. New York: Routledge, 1996.

Briggs, Katharine M. *The Folklore of the Cotswolds*. New Jersey: Rowman and Littlefield, 1974.

Bruner, Edward M. and Jane Paige Kelso. "Gender Differences in Graffiti: A Semiotic Perspective." *Women Studies International Quarterly* 3 (1980): 239-252.

C100 [pseudo.]. *The Art of Rebellion: World of Streetart*. California: Gingko, 2005.

Camporesi, Piero. *The Anatomy of the Senses: Natural Symbols in Medieval and Early Modern Italy*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994.

Chionetti, Bruno and Marco Vignola, ed. *Storia quotidiana nell'Italia del '400. Compagnia de lo albero bianco*. Italia: Marvia, 2009.

Cohen, Elizabeth S. and Thomas V. Cohen. *Daily Life in Renaissance Italy*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 2001.

Conti, Alessandro. *History of the Restoration and Conservation of Works of Arts*. Translated by Helen Glanville. Oxford: Elsevier Ltd., 2007.

Coulton, George Gordon. *Art and the Reformation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1928.

_____. *Medieval Graffiti, especially in the eastern countries*. London: Simpkin, Marshall, Halmilton, Kent & Co., 1915.

Cowan, Alexander. "Gossip and Street Culture in Early Modern Venice." *Journal of Early Modern History* 12 (2008): 313-333.

Cowan, Alexander and Jill Steward, ed. *The City and the Senses: Urban Culture Since 1500*. Vermont: Ashgate Publishing, 2007.

Crum, Roger J and John T. Paoletti. *Renaissance Florence: A Social History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Czarnecki, James G. "The Significance of Judas in Giotto's Arena Chapel Frescoes." In *Giotto and the World of Early Italian Art: An Anthology of Literature*, edited by Andrew Ladis. New York: Garland, 1998, 207-219.

Dean, Trevor. *Crime in Medieval Europe 1200-1550*. London: Pearson Education, 2001.

Derbes, Anne and Mark Sandona. "Barren Metal and the Fruitful Womb: The Program of Giotto's Arena Chapel in Padua." *The Art Bulletin* 80 (1998): 274-291.

Douay-Rheims Catholic Bible. accessed April 29, 2011, <http://www.drbo.org>.

Elliott, J.H. *Europe Divided: 1559-1598*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000.

Ferreiro, Alberto, ed. *The Devil, Heresy, and Witchcraft in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honor of Jeffrey B. Russell*. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Ferrero, Felice. *The Valley of Aosta: A Descriptive and Historical Sketch of an Alpine Valley Noteworthy in Story and in Monument*. New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1910.

Fleming, Juliet. *Graffiti and the Writing Arts of Early Modern England*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001.

Forrer, R. *Spätgothische Wohnräume und Wandmalereien aus Schloss Issogne*. Strassburg: Verlag von Fritz Schlesier, 1896.

Forsyth, Neil. "Satan: Making a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven." In *The Devil, Heresy, and Witchcraft in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honor of Jeffrey B. Russell*, Alberto Ferreiro, ed. Leiden: Brill, 1998: 241-258.

Foucault, Michael. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage, 1979.

Frank, Grace. "Proverbs in Medieval Literature." *Modern Language Notes* 58:7 (1943): 508-515.

Frojmovic, Eva. "Giotto's Circumspection." *The Art Bulletin* 89:2 (2007): 195-210.

- Galt, Anthony H. "The Evil Eye as Synthetic Image and Its Meanings on the Island of Pantelleria, Italy." *American Ethnologist* 9:4 (1982): 664-681.
- Gamboni, Dario. *The Destruction of Art: Iconoclasm and Vandalism Since the French Revolution*. London: Reaktion Books, 1997.
- Ganz, Nicholas. *Graffiti World: Street Art from Five Continents*. Edited by Tristan Manco. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2004.
- Gardiner, Mark. "Graffiti and their Use in Late Medieval England." In *Arts and Crafts in Medieval Rural Environment*, edited by Jan Klápště and Petr Sommer, 265-276. Hungary: Brepols, 2005.
- Garrison, Vivian and Conrad M. Arensberg. "The Evil Eye: Envy or Risk of Seizure? Paranoia or Patronal Dependency?" In *The Evil Eye*, edited by Clarence Maloney, 286-328. New York: Columbia University Press, 1976.
- Giacosa, Giuseppe. *Castelli valdostani e canavesani*. Turin: Roux & Frassati, 1898.
- _____. *I castelli valdostani*. Turin: L.F. Cogliati, 1905.
- _____. *Novelle e paesi valdostani*. Turin: Roux & Frassati, 1886.
- Gilson, Simon A. *Medieval Optics and Theories of Light in the Work of Dante*. New York: The Edwin Mellon Press, 2000.
- Glazebrook Allison and Madeleine Mary Henry. *Greek Prostitutes in the Ancient Mediterranean, 800 BCE–200 CE*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011.
- Grell, Ole Peter. "The creation of a transnational, Calvinist network and its significance for Calvinist identity and interaction in early modern Europe." *European Review of History* 16:5 (2009): 619.

- Griffith, Sidney H. "The Handwriting on the wall: Graffiti in the Church of St. Anthony." In *Monastic Visions: Wall Paintings in the Monastery of St. Anthony at the Red Sea*, edited by Elizabeth S. Bolman, 185-193. Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2002.
- Griseri, Andreina. *Affreschi nel Castello di Issogne*. Milan: Cassa di Risparmio, 1972.
- Gordon, Andrew. "The Act of Libel: Conscripting Civic Space in Early Modern England." *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 32:2 (2002): 375-397.
- Gottlieb, Lisa. *Graffiti Art Styles: A Classification System and Theoretical Analysis*. North Carolina: McFarland, 2008.
- Hamlyn, D.W. *Sensation and Perception: A History of the Philosophy of Perception*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961.
- Heers, Jacques. *Family Clans in the Middle Ages: A study of political and social structures in urban areas*. Translated by Barry Herbert. Vo. 4 of *Europe in the Middle Ages: Selected Studies*, edited by Richard Vaughan. New York: North Holland, 1977.
- Henisch, Bridget Ann. *The Medieval Calendar Year*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999.
- Henry, Abbé. *Histoire Populaire: Religieuse et Civile de la Vallée d'Aoste, tome I*. Aoste: Imprimerie Valdotaïne, 1949.
- Herlihy, David. *Women, Family and Society in Medieval Europe: Historical Essays, 1978-1991*. Providence: Berghahn, 1995.
- Herzfeld, Michael. "Meaning and Morality: A Semiotic Approach to Evil Eye Accusations in a Greek Village." *American Ethnologist* 8:3 (1981): 560-574.

- Hillerbrand, Hans Joachim. *Historical Dictionary of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation*. London: Scarecrow Press, 2000.
- Hine, Reginald L. *Church graffiti*. London: Harrison and Sons, 1921.
- Hyde, J.K. *Literacy and its uses: Studies on late medieval Italy*. Edited by Daniel Waley. Manchester: Manchester University, 1993.
- Hyman, Timothy. *Sienese Painting*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 2003.
- Jacobus, Laura. "Giotto's design of the Arena Chapel, Padua." In *Giotto and the World of Early Italian Art: An Anthology of Literature*, edited by Andrew Ladis, 349-355. New York: Garland, 1998.
- Jäggi, Carola. "Graffiti as a Medium for Memoria in the Early and High Middle Ages." In *Memory & Oblivion, Proceedings of the XXIXth International Congress of the History of Art held in Amsterdam, 1-7 September 1996*, edited by Wessel Reinink and Jeroen Stumpel. Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999.
- Jones-Baker, Doris. "English Mediaeval Graffiti and the Local Historian." *The Local Historian* 92.2 (1992): 4-19.
- _____. "The Graffiti of Folk Motifs in Cotswold Churches." *Folklore* 92:2 (1981): 160-167.
- Kelly, Gerard. "Eucharistic Sacrifice in the Council of Trent." *Irish Theological Quarterly* 51:268 (1985): 269.
- Kremers, Edward. "History of the Apothecary Shop: A Bibliography: No.4 The Apothecary Shop of Castle Issogne." *Journal of the American Pharmaceutical Association* 12.3 (1923): 252-255.
- Kruger, Steven F. *Dreaming in the Middle Ages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

- Kupfer, Marcia. "The cult of images in light of pictorial graffiti at Doué-la-Fontaine," *Early Medieval Europe* 19:2 (2011): 125-152.
- Lackey, Douglas P. "Giotto in Padua: A New Geography of the Human Soul." *The Journal of Ethics* 9:3/4 (2005): 551-572.
- Ladis, Andrew, ed. *Giotto and the World of Early Italian Art*. New York: Garland Publishing, 1998.
- _____. "The Legend of Giotto's Wit." In *Giotto and the World of Early Italian Art*, edited by Andrew Ladis, 245-260. New York: Garland Publishing, 1998.
- Langholm, Odd. *Economics in the Medieval Schools: Wealth, Exchange, Value, Money, and Usury according to the Paris Theological Tradition, 1200-1350*. Leiden: Brill, 1992.
- Le Goff, Jacques. *Your Money or Your Life: Economy and Religion in the Middle Ages*. New York: Zone Books, 1988.
- Lentes, Thomas. "'As far as the eye can see...': Rituals of Gazing in the Late Middle Ages." In *The Mind's Eye: Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages*, edited by Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Anne-Marie Bouché, 360-373. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2006.
- Lindberg, David C. *Theories of Vision from al-Kindi to Kepler*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976.
- Link, Luther. *The Devil: A Mask Without a Face*. London: Reaktion Books, 1995.
- Lydecker, Toni. "Shepherding Tradition: In Valle D'Aosta, Fontina Cheese Preserves More Than the Local Milk." *Culture* Fall/Autumn (2009): 69-75.

- Macy, Gary. "Dancin' the Council Away." *National Catholic Reporter* 37:25 (2001): 13.
- Maloney, Clarence, ed. *The Evil Eye*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1976.
- Mieth, Sven Georg. "Per i due tondi soprastanti l'antico accesso alla Cappella degli Scrovegni." *Bollettino del Museo Civico di Padova* 78 (1989): 15-20.
- Miles, Margaret R. *Image as Insight: Visual Understanding in Western Christianity and Secular Culture*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1985.
- Mongillo, Laura. "Florence: A (free) medieval graffiti walking tour." Eurocheapo. April 8, 2010. <http://www.eurocheapo.com/blog/florence-a-free-medieval-graffiti-walking-tour.html>.
- Mormando, Franco. "'Nudus nudum Christum sequi': The Franciscans and Differing Interpretations of Male Nakedness in Fifteenth-Century Italy." *Fifteenth Century Studies* 33 (2008): 171-97.
- Muir, Edward. *Mad Blood Stirring: Vendetta & Factions in Friuli during the Renaissance*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993.
- _____. *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Needham, Rodney. *Primordial Characters*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1978.
- Nichols, Stephen G. "The Pupil of Your Eye: Visions Language, and Poetry in Thirteenth-Century Paris." In *Rethinking the Medieval Senses: Heritage, Fascinations, Frames*, edited by Stephen G. Nichols, Andrea Kablitz and Alison Calhoun, 286-307. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008.

“Norfolk Medieval Graffiti Survey.” Accessed January 31, 2011.
<http://www.medieval-graffiti.co.uk>.

Nordenfalk, Carl. “The Five Senses in Late Medieval and Renaissance Art.”
Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 48 (1985): 1-22.

Norman, Diana. *Siena and the Virgin: Art and Politics in a Late Medieval City State*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.

Pastoureau, Michel. *The Devil’s Cloth: A History of Stripes and Striped Fabric*.
Translated by Jody Gladding. New York: Columbia University Press,
2001.

Parkhurst, Charles. “Roger Bacon on Color: Sources, Theories, and Influences.”
In *The Verbal and the Visual: Essays in Honor of William Sebastian Heckscher*,
edited by Karl-Ludwig Elizabeth Sears, 151-202. New York:
Ithaca Press, 1990.

Peters, Edward. “Destruction of the Flesh – Salvation of the Spirit: the Paradoxes
of Torture in Medieval Christian Society.” In *The Devil, Heresy, and
Witchcraft in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honor of Jeffrey B. Russell*,
edited by Alberto Ferreiro, 131-148. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Pettegree, Andrew. ed. *The Reformation World*. London: Routledge, 2000.

Plesch, Véronique. “Graffiti and Ritualization: San Sebastiano at Arborio.” In
*Medieval and Early Modern Ritual: Formalized Behavior in Europe,
China and Japan*, edited by Joëlle Rollo-Koster, 127-145. Leiden: Brill,
2002.

_____. “Memory on the Wall: Graffiti on Religious Wall Paintings.”
Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies 32:1 (2002): 167-197.

Pritchard, Violet. *English Medieval Graffiti*. New York: Cambridge University
Press, 1967.

Prosdocimi, A. *Il comune di Padova e la Cappella degli Scrovegni nell'ottocento. Acquisto e restauri agli affreschi*. Padua, 1961.

Reisner, Robert. *Graffiti Two Thousand Years of Wall Writing*. New York: Cowles Book, 1971.

Ridder-Syons, Hilde de, ed. *A History of the University in Europe: Volume I: Universities in the Middle Ages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Riess, Jonathon B. *Political Ideals in Medieval Italian Art: The Frescoes in the Palazzo dei Priori, Perugia (1927)*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1981.

Roettgen, Steffi. *Italian Frescoes: The Flowering of the Renaissance 1470-1510*. Translated by Russell Stockman. New York: Abbeville, vol. II, 1996.

Rosenwein, Barbara H. *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*. Ithaca: Cornell University, 2006.

_____. "Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions." *Passions in Context* 11 (2010): 2-30.

_____. "Thinking Historically about Medieval Emotions." *History Compass* 8:8 (2010): 828-842.

_____. "Writing without fear about early medieval emotions." *Early Medieval Europe* 10:2 (2001): 229-234.

_____. "Worrying about Emotions in History." *The American Historical Review* 107:3 (2002): 821-845.

Rossetti, Lucia. *The University of Padua: An Outline of its History*. Trieste: Edizioni Lint, 1983.

Rublack, Ulinka. *Reformation Europe. Edition of New Approaches to European History*, edited by William Beik and T.C.W. Blanning. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Schechner, Richard. *Performance Theory*. New York: Routledge, 2003.

Schleif, Corine and Volker Schier. *Katerina's Window: Donation and Devotion, Art and Music, as Heard and Seen Through the Writings of a Birgittine Nun*. Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009.

Schüssler, Gosbert . "Giotto's visuelle Definition der 'Spientia Saeculi' in der Cappella Scrovegni zu Padua." In *Opere e giorni: Studi su mille anni di arte europea dedicati a Max Seidel*, edited by Klaus Bergdolt and Giovanni Bonsanti, 111-22. Venice: Marsilio, 2001.

Schlegel, Ursula. "On the Picture Program of the Arena Chapel (1957)." In *Giotto: the Arena Chapel Frescoes*, edited by James H Stubblebine, 182-202. New York: Norton Press, 1969.

Scott-Warren, Jason. "Reading Graffiti in the Early Modern Book." *Huntington Library Quarterly* 73:3 (2010): 363-381.

Selderhuis, Herman J. *John Calvin: A Pilgrim's Life*. Illinois: InterVaristy Press, 2009.

Selvatico, P. *Sulla Cappellina degli Scrovegni nell'Arena di Padova e sui freschi di Giotto*. Padua, 1836.

Shorr, Dorothy C. "The Role of the Virgin in Giotto's Last Judgment (1956)." In *Giotto: the Arena Chapel Frescoes*, edited by James H Stubblebine, 169-181. New York: Norton Press, 1969.

Siraisi, Nancy G. *Arts and Sciences at Padua: The Studium of Padua Before 1350*. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1973.

- Soskice, Janet Martin. "Sight and Vision in Medieval Christian Thought." In *Vision in Context: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Sight*, edited by Teresa Brennan and Martin Jay, 29-43. New York: Routledge, 1996.
- Stubblebine, James H., ed. *Giotto: the Arena Chapel Frescoes*. New York: Norton Press, 1969.
- Summers, David. *Visions, Reflection, and Desire in Western Painting*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007.
- Sutton, Kay. "The Lost 'Officiolum' of Francesco da Barberino Rediscovered." *The Burlington Magazine* 147:1224 (2005): 152-164.
- Turner, Victor W. *The Ritual Process*. Chicago: Aldine, 1969.
- Vance, Eugene. "Seeing G-d: Augustine, Sensation, and the Mind's Eye." In *Rethinking the Medieval Senses: Heritage, Fascinations, Frames*, edited by Stephen G. Nichols, Andrea Kablitz and Alison Calhoun, 13-29. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008.
- Vitry, Jacques de. *The "Exempla" or Illustrative Stories from the "Sermones vulgares" of Jacques de Vitry*. Edited by T.F. Crane. Nendeln, Liechtenstein: Kraus Reprint, 1967.
- Watt, Jeffrey R. "The Reception of the Reformation in Valangin, Switzerland, 1547-1588," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 20:1 (1989): 89-104.
- Welch, Evelyn. *Shopping in the Renaissance: Consumer Cultures in Italy 1400-1600*. New Haven: Yale University, 2005.
- Weisner-Hanks, Merry E. *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*. 3rd ed. of *New Approaches to European History*, edited by William Beik, T.C.W. Blanning, and Brendan Simms. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Wickham, Chris. "Gossip and Resistance Among the Medieval Peasantry," *Past & Present* 160 (1998): 3-24.

Williams, Rebecca. "Historical significance of graffiti." University of Leeds.
accessed July 11, 2011,
http://www.leeds.ac.uk/news/article/854/historical_significance_of_graffiti.

Zammit-Maempel, G. "The Evil Eye and Protective Cattle Horns in Malta." *Folklore* 79:1 (1968): 1-16.

Zigrosser, Carl. "The Philip S. Collins Collection of Mediaeval Illuminated Manuscripts," *Philadelphia Museum of Art Bulletin* 58:275 (1962): 3-34.

FIGURES



Figure 1. Giotto di Bondone, *Last Judgment*, ca. 1306, fresco. Arena Chapel, west wall, Padua, Italy. (artwork in the public domain)

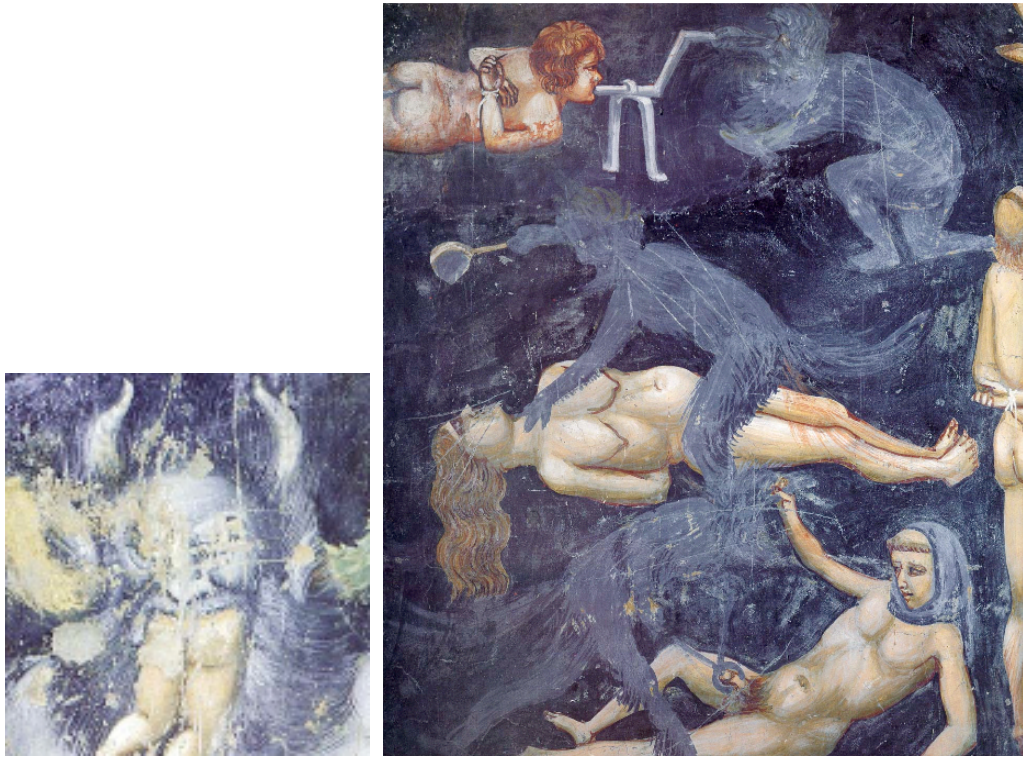


Figure 2 and Figure 3. Giotto di Bondone, *Last Judgment* (details), ca. 1306, fresco. Arena Chapel, west wall, Padua, Italy. (artwork in the public domain)



Figure 4 and Figure 5. Giotto di Bondone, *Personification of Despair* (and detail), ca. 1306, fresco. Arena Chapel, north wall, Padua, Italy (artwork in the public domain)



Figure 6 and Figure 7. Giotto di Bondone, *Personification of Envy* (and detail), ca. 1306, fresco. Arena Chapel, north wall, Padua, Italy. (artwork in the public domain)



Figure 8 and Figure 9. Giotto di Bondone, *Personification of Idolatry* (and detail), ca. 1306, fresco. Arena Chapel, north wall, Padua, Italy. (artwork in the public domain)



Figure 10. Giotto di Bondone, *Personification of Charity and Hope*, ca. 1306, fresco. Arena Chapel, north wall, Padua, Italy. (artwork in the public domain)



Figure 11. Giotto di Bondone, *Circumspection*, ca. 1306, fresco. Arena Chapel, north doorway, Padua, Italy. (artwork in the public domain)

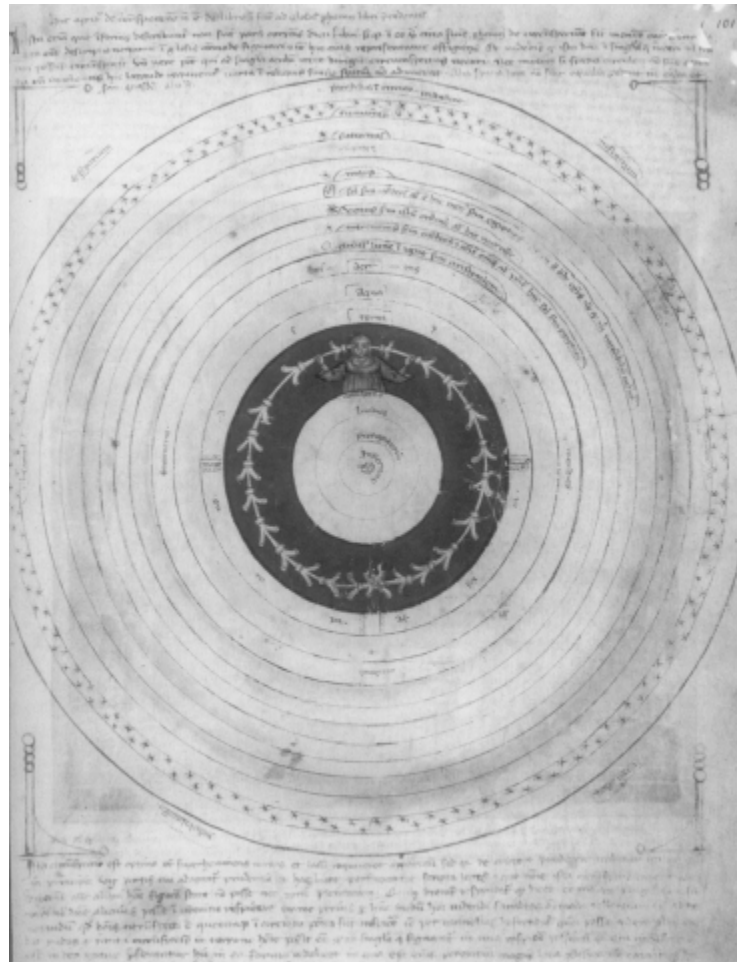




Figure 13. Colin and Etienne?, *Guardhouse*, ca. 1489-1502, fresco. Issogne Castle, courtyard, Aosta Valley, Italy. © SuperStock / SuperStock



Figure 14. Colin and Etienne?, *Produce Stalls*, ca. 1489-1502, fresco. Issogne Castle, courtyard, Aosta Valley, Italy. © Art Archive, The / SuperStock



Figure 15. Colin and Etienne?, *Apothecary*, ca. 1489-1502, fresco. Issogne Castle, courtyard, Aosta Valley, Italy. © Silvio Fiore / SuperStock

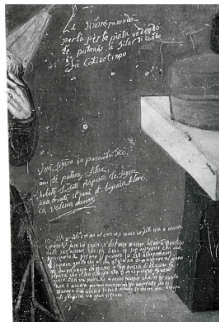


Figure 16 and Figure 17. Colin and Etienne?, *Salami-cheese Shop* (and detail), ca. 1489-1502, fresco. Issogne Castle, courtyard, Aosta Valley, Italy. © Silvio Fiore / SuperStock

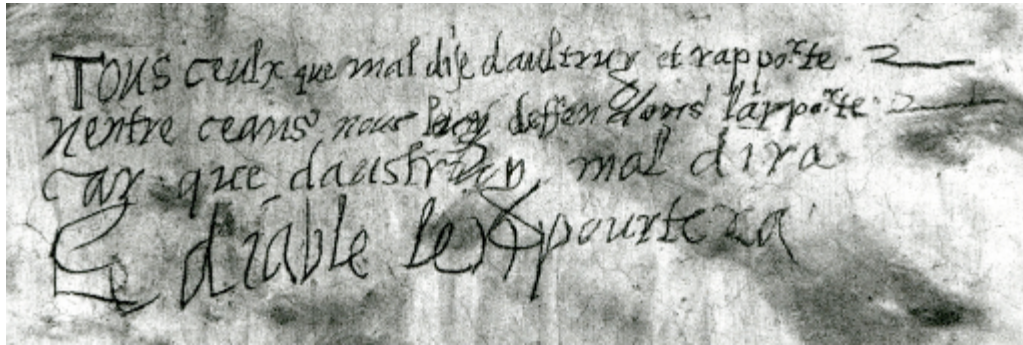


Figure 18. Anonymous, “Gossip is Evil” graffito, sanguine on plaster, 16th century. Issogne Castle, second floor, Aosta Valley, Italy. (artwork in the public domain)

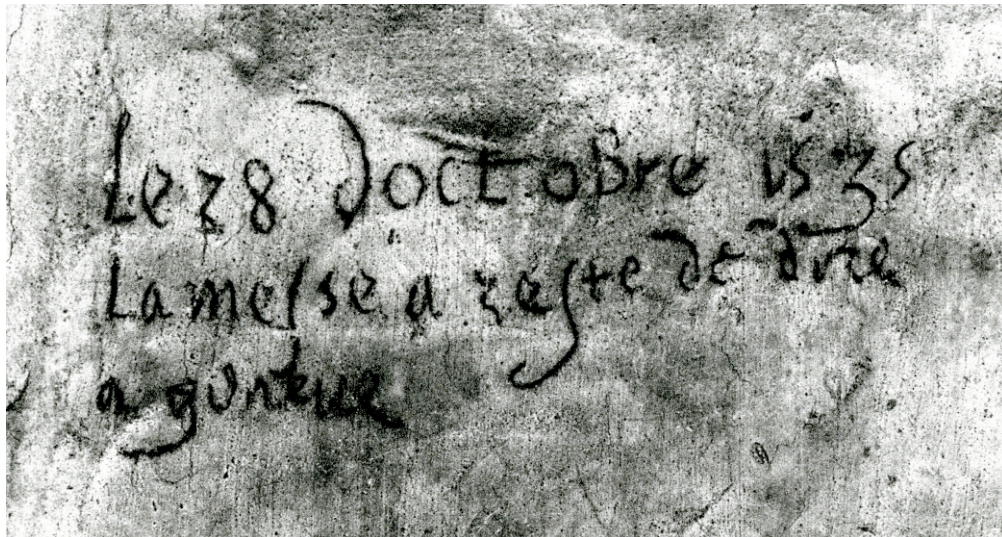


Figure 19. Anonymous, *Graffito I*, sanguine on plaster, 1535. Issogne Castle, second floor, Aosta Valley, Italy. (artwork in the public domain)

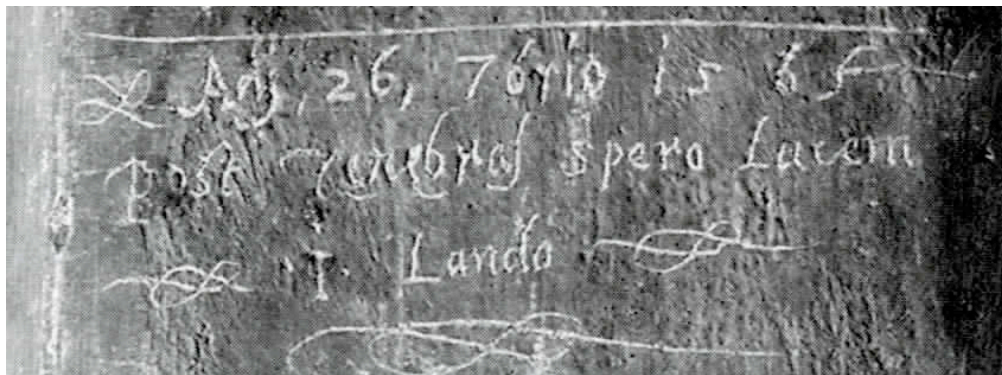


Figure 20. Anonymous, *Graffito II*, incised with a metal point, 1565. Issogne Castle, second floor Oratory, Aosta Valley, Italy. (artwork in the public domain)

APPENDIX A

COPYRIGHT PERMISSION FOR FIG. 13-17



SuperStock
7960 Centurian Parkway
Jacksonville, FL 32256
904 565-0096
Fax 904 641-4480

INVOICE

Page 1

Acct# 109148-J

Invoice# 286899 101935

Date: 2/20/2012 990

Delivery
Contact#:

P.O./Box# /

Client: self

Terms: Net 30 days

The images listed below must be returned in the same condition as delivered.
IMPORTANT: Terms and conditions for the use of images are printed on the
back. Your acceptance of these images is a acknowledgment that you agree
to be bound by these terms. Another the images are delivered under a
CC BY-NC-SA license for SuperStock's use only.

Rights-Protected Images (Terms & Conditions of Use are on the back of the invoice)

862-1731	50.00	Castle at Issogne, Valle d'Aosta, Italy/ ET Archive, London/SuperStock
4069-563	50.00	SuperStock/SuperStock
2102-535712	50.00	Castle at Issogne, Valle d'aosta, Italy/ Silvio Fiore/SuperStock
2102-535711	50.00	Castle At Issogne, Valle D'aosta, Italy/ Silvio Fiore/SuperStock

R College Thesis Use, Internal Presentation \$200.00
Posted on non commercial website/archived for life of project
RM Quarter, Circulation 0
Start Date: Feb 17, 2012
Length: 10 Years
Expires on Feb 17, 2022

T Licenses for Rights-Managed Images are granted for one-time, non-
exclusive, United States rights only and are limited to one year,
unless specifically noted otherwise.

Paid 2/17/2012 4:00:01 PM -\$200.00

Balance \$0.00

PLEASE INCLUDE INVOICE # ON PAYMENT